Commentary
Volume Seventy-two, Number Two, August 1981

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Are Jews Becoming Republican?
Milton Himmelfarb

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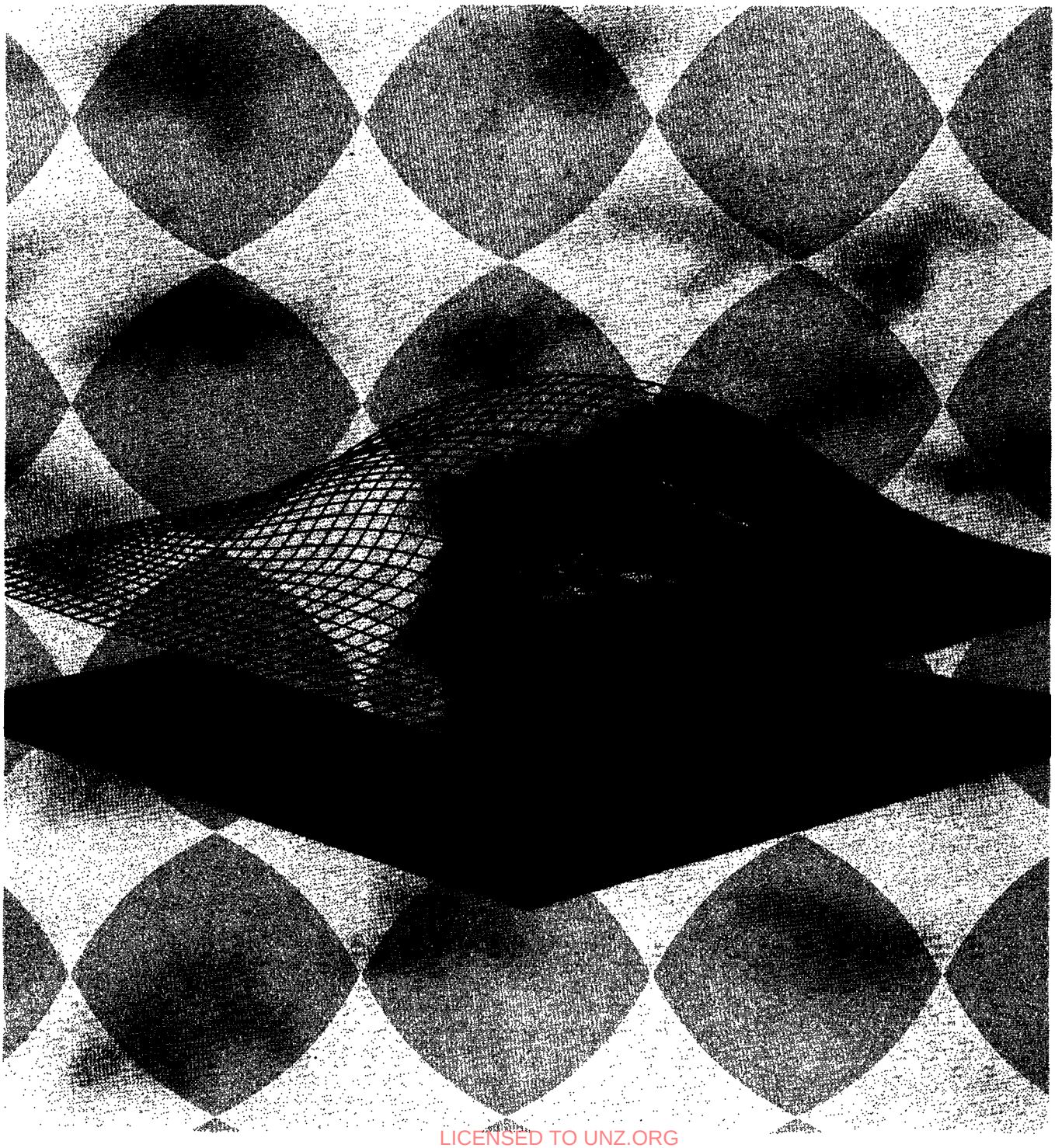

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Commentary

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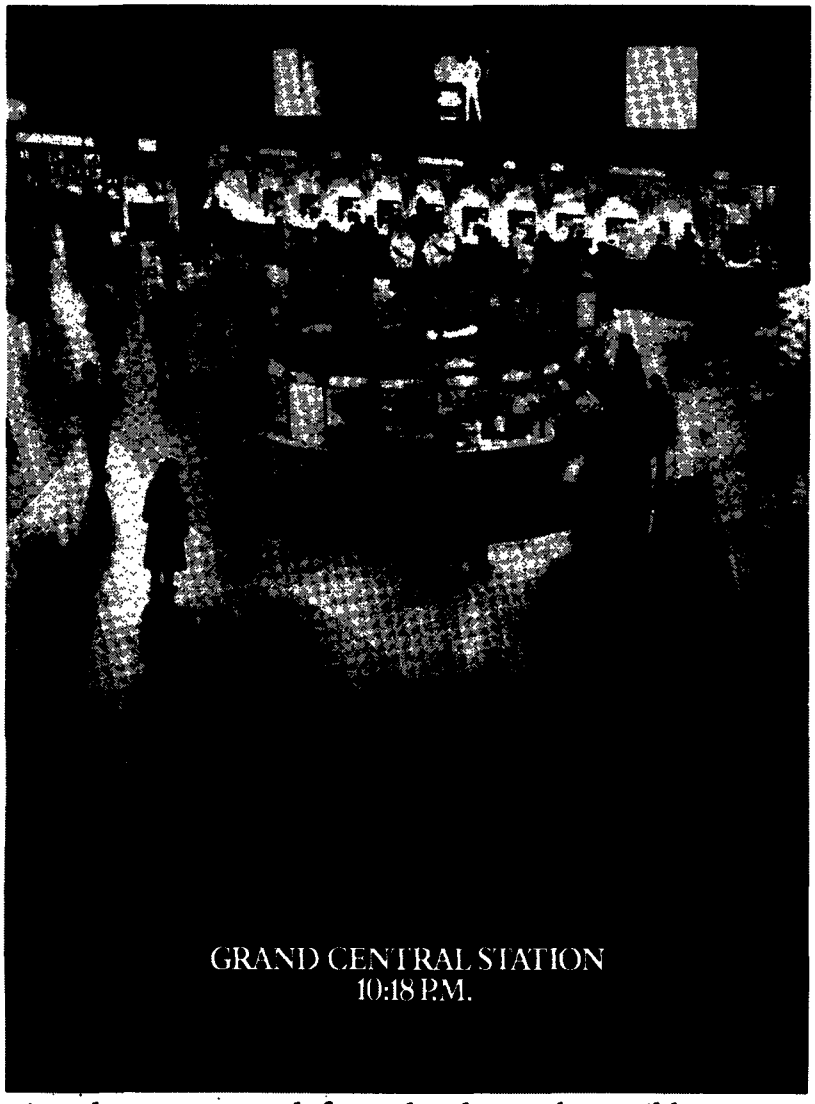

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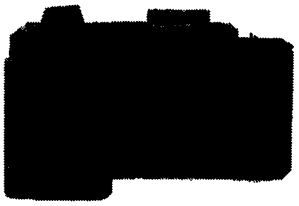

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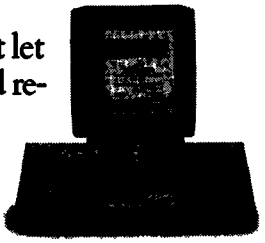

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Letters from Readers

"The Future Danger"

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Only on one point do I believe Norman Podhoretz ["The Future Danger," April] could have put more stress. This is the alarming revival and strength of the mood of neutralism, pacifism, and in effect anti-Americanism in Europe which may prevent redressing the nuclear balance there. Even if if this mood does not prevent the necessary rearming it may paralyze the will to resist if and when the crunch comes.

Despite the revelations of Solzhenitsyn and others, the "Better-Red-Than-Dead" position, with its false antithesis, is much stronger today than when I debated the issue with Bertrand Russell twenty years ago. How to reverse this mood is a formidable and pressing task which is not receiving the attention it deserves. Arms without the will and courage to use them are useless—they create the illusion of a readiness which is not there. It is a theme worth pondering, and should result in an educational program for action that may require the concerted efforts of many of us.

The prospects for the future—barring contingencies no one can foresee—are grim. I fear that even the resolve to go down fighting may be dismissed as a rhetorical affectation by those who are prepared to come to terms with the new wave—no matter what.

SIDNEY HOOK
The Hoover Institution
Stanford, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I read Norman Podhoretz's "The Future Danger" with great interest. Allow me to make three comments about it, in ascending order of generalization:

1. On a relatively minor point, it may sound nice to talk about "a resumption by the Reagan administration of friendly American relations with Argentina and South Korea," but the facts, at least in the case of Korea, do not justify this phrase.

It is true that the present administration has improved relations significantly and, because of actions taken by both governments, the road now lies open for a much warmer relationship. The previous four years saw a period of great stress in U.S.-Korea relations. Relations were strained, but to suggest that they were unfriendly is inaccurate and misleading. There were serious problems over the Carter administration's troop-withdrawal policy, but these were resolved with the suspension of that policy on July 20, 1979. The Koreagate affair, which predated the Carter administration, was resolved by the end of 1978 through a difficult negotiation involving the Justice Department, the Congress, the State Department, and the Korean government.

Resolution of this explosive issue without serious strategic cost was a major accomplishment. And on the *emotional* set of issues known collectively as human rights, the Carter administration made its views known in private to the South Korean government but took no action which weakened or undermined the government of the Republic of Korea. The people charged with making policy toward Korea understood just as well as Mr. Podhoretz does the differences between North Korea—one of the most thoroughly regimented totalitarian states in the world—and South Korea. . . .

2. Of greater importance is Mr. Podhoretz's argument concerning China. If I understand him correctly, he is saying that we would gain the benefits of China's anti-Soviet stance whether or not we cooperated with the Chinese or sought to improve our bilateral and strategic relations with Peking. I further understand him to be implying, although he does not so state explicitly, that there is little or no difference between Chinese Communism and Russian Communism.

Both of these views are, in my opinion, not only wrong but, if used as a basis for policy, potentially disastrous. While China will make its own decisions, the amount of encouragement and support it receives from Japan and the West, especially for its modernization program, will have an important effect on the course of China's foreign and domestic policies.

The relative cost of such an effort is comparatively small compared to its potential benefits. We cannot, of course, be sure that China will not at some future date choose to revert to its Stalin-era foreign policy of the 1950's, or the Mao-era foreign policy of the 1960's, but a growing interaction with the

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If you don't find instructions on the pump, here's what to do at most stations: 1. Turn off the engine. 2. Remove the fuel cap. 3. Remove the nozzle from the pump and turn the pump lever to "ON." 4. Place the nozzle in your fuel tank and squeeze the trigger. 5. When the trigger clicks off, remove the nozzle from the tank and turn the pump lever to "OFF." 6. Replace your fuel cap.

There are some things, however, that the directions may not tell you. Fuel fumes are highly flammable, so you should never smoke at a service station. Also, fuel caps are easy to forget and lose, so when you remove the cap try to wedge it in between the door to the tank and body of the car, where you're not likely to forget it. All 1981 and most older General Motors cars have fuel caps that twist on and then click when secure.

When you're filling up, try to avoid topping off your tank, since it may overflow. If fuel does spill on your car, you should wash it off as soon as possible, to avoid paint damage.

After you fill your tank, remember to clean your windshield. If you've been driving in bad weather, be sure to wipe off your side mirrors and headlights, too.

A quick-maintenance inspection can help you spot potential trouble. You don't need any expensive tools—just a good quality tire gauge, a rag or paper towel, an oil can spout kept in a plastic bag, and a jug of premixed windshield washer fluid, such as GM Optikleen.

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Periodically check your brake, transmission, and power steering fluid levels. Your owner's manual tells you how. Remember to keep the windshield washer reservoir filled with fluid, too, especially in the winter when you use it most often.

Most GM cars are equipped with maintenance-free batteries. But it's still wise to make sure their cables are on tight and the ends aren't frayed. Look for fraying, cracks, or other signs of wear on belts, too.

Look at tires for signs of wear or worn-out edges which can indicate improper inflation or the need for alignment. Once a month, you should use a tire gauge to check the pressure. In GM cars, the recommended pressure is on the left front door edge or inside the glove compartment. Recommended pressure is for cold tires, so check them before you drive more than a mile.

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Chinese government decreases the chances of that happening. So, while success is far from certain, a policy of improving relations with Peking is in our national interest, as the last three Presidents (two of them Republicans) all stated.

To pursue such a policy does not imply approval or acceptance of the type of government in China. It must be noted, however, that in the last four years there has been a remarkable liberalization in the lives of individual Chinese. That life under the Chinese Communists continues to be different from life in non-Communist societies is self-evident. Nonetheless, recent events in China, especially the growth in candor concerning the country's own shortcomings and the dramatic increase in the personal autonomy of individual Chinese, suggest that China is at present following an internal course very different from that of the Soviet Union.

In this regard, I wonder if Mr. Podhoretz would also apply his argument to Yugoslavia, another country in which personal freedoms are clearly curtailed, yet whose stand against Soviet domination is long-standing, courageous, and deserving, in my view, of our strong support.

3. This brings me to my last point. I think most Americans would agree that in the end the real difference between us and our adversaries is one of values. A deeply troubled internal dialogue over the last twenty years in this country has led some Americans on both the Left and Right to minimize or even lose sight of that difference. However, I believe that, in the final analysis, Americans understand that the fundamental difference between our values and system of government and that of totalitarian states is central to the very reasons for our foreign policy. As a nation, we should stand for those values.

In the last twenty years, Communism has suffered a series of *political* setbacks throughout the world, from Egypt and Indonesia to the recent dismal showing of the Communist party in the French elections. Once many people believed Communism was going to capture and ride to power anti-colonial movements in Latin American, Africa, and Asia. This is no longer true. As an ideology, Communism today seems bankrupt.

Ironically, however, these political setbacks have made the Russians all the more dangerous. Losing any opportunity to create broadly-based movements, Soviet Communism and its supporters have turned to an even more militaristic policy, building up their ground and naval forces throughout much of the world and increasing their efforts at political subversion. It is this that we must now confront with policies that demonstrate both our political will and skill, and our strategic capability.

In the pursuit of our objectives, we will deal with a wide variety of governments, whether we approve of them or not. This applies to South Korea as well as to China. In either case, it is important, while we not seek to impose our values on other nations, that our own behavior be consistent with our own values.

RICHARD HOLBROOKE*
Washington, D.C.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Norman Podhoretz's "The Present Danger" [March 1980] was the classical statement of our current predicament. Indeed, tribute must be paid to Mr. Podhoretz's and COMMENTARY's unique contribution to "the seismic upheaval in American public opinion" that produced the "new consensus" concerning the growth of Soviet power and the decline of American power, and the need to restore the balance if peace in freedom is to prevail in the world.

In "The Future Danger" Mr. Podhoretz carries his analysis forward beyond the election of President Reagan which confirmed the new consensus and the restirring of a "new nationalism." In this sequel, Mr. Podhoretz is concerned with a new danger in the years ahead that may arise from a too-narrowly conceived definition of the nature of the struggle in which we are engaged.

Already in "The Present Danger" he warned against confining the struggle to the purely military-strategic level and stressed the need to engage the Soviets in the arena of ideas, in the ideological struggle against Communism. However, in "The Future Danger" he . . . gives precedence to the ideological struggle by discarding the more limited military-strategic-*Realpolitik* concept of "the containment of Soviet expansionism" in favor of the larger framework of the "containment of Communism." . . .

The concept of the "containment of Soviet expansionism" is represented in Mr. Podhoretz's article by Robert W. Tucker and Paul Nitze. But the difficulty is that Mr. Podhoretz's polemics against Nitze and Tucker are not conducted on the level of differing military-strategic approaches but are raised to the level of principle within the context of the rival concepts of global strategy posited by Mr. Podhoretz.

I of course cannot speak for Tucker and Nitze, but from my reading of their views, I do not think either would challenge the thesis that the ideological conflict exists, that it must be met at the level of ideas, and must be coordinated with the military-strategic aspects of the contest. . . . I would guess, however, that they would differ from Mr. Podhoretz on the relative importance of the ideological component in the grand strategy of the conflict. But this issue does not enter into their thinking when they address what they see as the main problem we face today: how best to dissuade the Soviet Union from using its present military superiority to alter the world balance of power irrevocably in its favor while the U.S. seeks belatedly to redress its weakness and establish countervailing military power. . . .

Whatever the differing strategic prescriptions of Nitze and Tucker, the underlying rationale of their thought is based on valid considerations of *Realpolitik*. At this level, the strategy of "limited containment" is geopolitical-strategic and not ideological in nature. The doctrine of geographically-limited military confrontation does not at all clash in principle with the necessity of conducting an unceasing ideological struggle or even with the priority of that struggle.

The strategic necessity of choosing the areas of confrontation with the Soviet Union is conceded in principle by Mr. Podhoretz when he calls for the adoption of the "rule of prudence" in deciding . . . when, where, or whether to confront direct or indirect Soviet expansionism. Supporters of containment will differ on the calculus, but such considerations are of a different order from weighing the comparative merits of "the containment of Soviet expansionism" and "the containment of Communism,"

* Mr. Holbrooke was Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs in the Carter administration.—ED.

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which belong to different universes of discourse.

Unfortunately, Mr. Podhoretz has chosen Vietnam as the star example of imprudent judgment, echoing Hans J. Morgenthau's thesis that Vietnam was "the wrong war in the wrong place at the wrong time." This is certainly not the occasion for an extended discussion of Vietnam, but as I argued at the time—and post-Vietnam history has fully confirmed the point—it was, indeed, the right war in the right place at the right time. Vietnam was not an unnecessary war; it was an unnecessary defeat.

Mr. Podhoretz correctly states the prudential rule: "never to undertake a military operation without the will and the means (including the domestic political support) to win." All these factors were indeed present in the early stages of the war but were recklessly dissipated by egregious military and political blunders, the most crucial being the blind, ideologically induced failure to play the China card to achieve an outcome favorable to both the U.S. and China. In vain it was posited that the U.S. and China had vital long-term parallel interests in Southeast Asia to prevent the Soviet encirclement of China and to halt Soviet expansionism and North Vietnamese hegemonism. Now, as we sadly view the post-Vietnam wreckage in Southeast Asia, these parallel interests have belatedly become self-evident and have started to be pursued, albeit with unfortunate zig-zags. Instead, we played the Russian card of détente and relied on deceitful Russian-backed guarantees of the peace agreements and suffered humiliating defeat. Had we, with the collaboration of China, halted Russia and its surrogate North Vietnam then, we might well have stopped Soviet expansionism in its tracks and altered the entire international landscape.

I raise this issue now because even at this late date there is still a widespread failure (even among the most vigorous advocates of containment in and out of the Reagan administration) to grasp the true lesson of Vietnam as the turning point in the present "correlation of forces." This is expressed, in my view, in Mr. Podhoretz's continuing opposition to playing the China card under conditions far more exigent than existed at the time of Vietnam. This is one of the most unfortunate consequences of giving primacy to ideology over geopolitics and *Realpolitik* considerations of the balance of power. The refusal to play the China card in our present predicament seriously violates the rule of prudence.

The central concept of "The Future Danger" is that a strategy of "containment of Soviet expansionism" is inadequate to sustain enduring political support and should be replaced by one of "containment of Communism"; that "[a] strategy of limited containment [of Soviet expansionism] to deal with the present danger does not go far enough to head off this, the future danger. Only a strategy based on the containment of Communism can confound [the] prophecy [of a Soviet-dominated world]."

But Communism is an ideology—an idea—and how does one contain an idea? All of history argues against this possibility. President Reagan said it well at Notre Dame: "The West will not contain Communism, it will transcend Communism." And as Mr. Podhoretz himself points out, Communism as an idea is already in advanced historic decline, an admitted failure. It prevails and survives only where it is backed up by the armed might of the Soviet Union or its surrogates. Eliminate or tame the explosion of Soviet military power by countervailing military power and the discredited Communist ideology will implode with the totalitarian structure that maintains it and be relegated to the dustbin of history. . . .

Shifting the battleground to an ideological anti-Communism, far from rallying the nation, our allies, and the Third World, may well have the opposite effect. An attempt by the U.S. to impose an ideological test for membership in a global alliance against the Soviet threat, far from being a unifying force, will be a divisive one and will increase our danger, not diminish it.

In the U.S., Communism during the era of détente remained an abstract, distant threat until Vietnamese aggression in Cambodia, Cuban intervention in Angola and Ethio-

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pia, and especially the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan awakened the nation to the need to gird itself to defend America's vital interests and restore a favorable global "correlation of forces" vis-à-vis the Soviet bloc. As for the threat of a new isolationism, its roots more often lay in repeatedly disappointed hopes from a misplaced reliance in two world wars on abstract ideals and a neglect of *Realpolitik* balance-of-power considerations which alone could have justified the sacrifices and insured the fruits of victory. The danger of a revival of American isolationism is likely to come from a failure to learn the lessons of the past as well as from a failure of our allies to assume a fair share of the global burden.

As for Europe and Japan, the main beneficiaries (after the Soviet Union) of détente, it is hardly likely that these reluctant partners can be rallied around the banner of a crusade against Communism. It needed the shock of Afghanistan and Poland to awaken them to the mortal danger to their own security and independence from Soviet global expansionism. The serious challenge ahead is to transform this new sense of danger into a willingness to abandon their parochial regionalism and "Eurosocialism" and join in global arrangements to defend our common interests.

The Third World nations, for obvious reasons, are the least likely to embrace an American call for battle against Communism. In fact, any effort in that direction would undermine our chances of winning new friends in the Third World and certainly undo collaboration with China. However, recent events have demonstrated that fear of the consequences of Soviet-led expansionism has for the first time in recent years created a breach between the Third World and the Communist bloc. The shock of Cambodia and Afghanistan has led many of the developing nations and even nations of the "neutral" bloc reluctantly but irresistibly to join the civilized world in the condemnation of these aggressions and has fed the growing disillusionment with the Soviet Union as "the natural ally" of the Third World.

These considerations have led me to the conclusion that we can succeed in fashioning an effective alliance only around the unifying issue of Soviet expansionism, the present and future danger. In the course of that struggle, however, the nations of the world will also come to the understanding that Communist totalitarianism is at the root of the world's difficulties and that, if we are to have a future of peace in freedom, it will be necessary to defeat both Soviet expansionism and Communist totalitarianism. Indeed, if we succeed in halting and defeating Soviet expansionism, we can rely on the peoples of the Soviet bloc themselves to put an end to the dark night of Communism.

To this undertaking, Norman Podhoretz and COMMENTARY have made a contribution beyond measure.

ELIAS M. SCHWARZBART
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I admire all of "The Future Danger," and agree with most of it, but want to quarrel with Norman Podhoretz's position on China. . . . There are four possible objections to helping the Chinese.

1. The Chinese may become allies of the Soviet Union once more. In the foreseeable future this is possible, but not probable. Diplomacy must deal with probabilities; for example, our help to Yugoslavia, a country far less certain to remain nonaligned (unlike China, it was never hostile to the Soviet Union) is justifiable.

2. The Chinese may become a "menace to our children and grandchildren." But this is no reason not to help them if this help will reduce the present danger from the Soviet Union. The Chinese can become a future danger to us only after a Soviet defeat. Thus the Chinese menace is remote and far-fetched. . . .

3. The Chinese currently are so poor and unequipped that to help them would not be cost-effective—they could not significantly reduce the Soviet threat to us. But they already do. And, however badly equipped, a billion people, if reasonably well organized as the Chinese are, cannot be altogether insignificant militarily.

Helping the Chinese to acquire anti-tank and anti-aircraft weapons, for example, would be a cheap and effective way of reducing Soviet military superiority. Beyond that, help is more costly and problematical—but still advantageous. An artillery weapon provided to the Chinese by us will, in effect, relocate a Soviet weapon from Europe —i.e., we will have to contend with one fewer in another theater. . . .

4. Would helping China—with or without a formal alliance (which would not add much)—lead to a "loss of clarity about our purpose" as Mr. Podhoretz thinks? No such loss was suffered when we were allied to the Soviet Union against Nazi Germany. Nor did the Nazi "master race" suffer such a loss when allied to the "inferior" Japanese. A decrease of intellectual simplicity would disturb only a few people. (Unlike Mr. Podhoretz, most ideologists are not interested in consistency.)

But Mr. Podhoretz's objection somewhat mistakes or blurs "our purpose." It is not to "fight Communism"—much as we detest that odious system and its ideology—but to deter, and if necessary, defend ourselves against aggression by a specific Communist power. By definition if we "fight Communism" in general we could not have Communist allies. But we want only to deter, or defend against, aggression by a Communist country, the Soviet Union, and its allies. There is no reason we cannot help (and be helped by) other Communist countries, if they are interested, as we are, in deterring or defending themselves against aggression by the Soviet Union and in preventing its domination. If this is *Realpolitik* so be it—I think a policy that is not realistic is foolish.

Norman Podhoretz draws attention to the difficulties a realistic policy presents to ideological clarity and propaganda, which, he rightly thinks, are important. But is it not possible to say, truthfully, that we deplore Communism, both in the Soviet and Chinese version, yet at present feel endangered (or more endangered) by the aggressive activities of the Soviet Union and not by the domestic or foreign activities of the Chinese?

ERNEST VAN DEN HAAG
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

"The Future Danger" is the most objective and thorough description of the road to disaster that U.S. foreign policy has actually helped to build. The danger, in my view, comes not only from the Soviet empire, but is a result as well of the shortcomings of U.S. foreign policy. Why have so many gifted and patriotic American thinkers and scholars pursued—and continue to pursue—a policy that has helped

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Linus Pauling, Ph.D.:

ON GOOD NUTRITION FOR THE GOOD LIFE

. . . in which the two-time Nobel Laureate informs you of his personal approach . . . his own intake of many vitamins . . . and why—for your own possible guidance—that intake differs so markedly from conventional recommendations

PUBLISHER'S NOTE: *On the 14th of July last, a British subscriber wrote us to urge a special report. "I would like very much to see a report," he put it, "setting forth an authoritative and reliable proposed daily vitamin dosage for the middle-aged to older person in good health. As to an* authoritative *recommendation covering all the vitamins, and the amounts of each, I haven't a clue! Perhaps one wrap-up report could cover this interesting and important topic. It would certainly be appreciated, I am sure, by most readers." We turned to Dr. Linus Pauling, a long-time member of our Editorial Board, who had only recently given a talk, very much germane, as a guest of the California Institute of Technology's Y's Leaders in America program. Here is that talk, as adapted and updated by Dr. Pauling for Executive Health readers.*

I believe that it is possible by rather simple means, essentially nutritional, to increase the length of life expectancy for young people and middle-aged people (and to some extent, perhaps, old people too) by about 20 years.

Not only can the life expectancy be increased, I believe, but also the length of the period of well-being can be increased by the same amount, or perhaps even a little longer; because it is likely that, as long as the process of aging goes on, the process of deterioration that culminates in death will proceed more rapidly at a late age than an earlier one.

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the Soviets become at least militarily superior to the U.S.?

I think the most concise answer to this question can be found in Henry Kissinger's *White House Years* where we read: "In sum, there does not seem any single unifying thread to Soviet foreign policy." In other words, the author of the U.S. foreign policy that essentially is still pursued did not recognize that there exists a long-term Soviet strategy and consequently had no reason either to analyze Soviet strategy or to formulate a long-term American strategy. The cold war was lost because of a lack of understanding of Soviet strategy; for the same reason détente was a catastrophe; and I think Norman Podhoretz's "containment of Communism" will hardly be more successful.

In my view, the Soviet Union is a typical imperialist country, and its foreign policy is simply a continuation of Czarist imperialism. . . . It is important to emphasize that we have to deal with Russian, and not simply with Soviet, imperialism, since the oppression of nationalities is as typical of the Soviet system as it was of the Czarist system.

The old Russian chauvinism and its messianic mission is brought to an even higher level by making full use of Marxist philosophy (which is also messianic, though its messianism is couched in "scientific" terms). Of course, where pragmatism requires it, Marxism is violated. In 1945 Stalin declared that but for the Russian nation and its heroism, the war could not have been won. It was an admission that the other nations of the Soviet Union did not feel they were defending their homeland; the majority of these nations showed open hostility to the entire Soviet war effort. To these oppressed nations, the Russians have added some 100 million more people represented by the nations of Eastern Europe; the Russians, the ruling nationality, are quite outnumbered. . . .

The old Czarist dream of becoming the master of Eurasia is the long-term strategic goal of the Soviets. They are fully aware that but for the U.S. this dream could materialize; consequently, they have to push America out of Europe. All that the Soviets are doing in Asia and Africa, Cuba and its neighbors, can be understood as tactical steps toward their strategic goal. Against this strategy of imperialist expansion we must work out our own strategy which must be a strategy for peace and freedom and not merely some kind of containment, including containment of Communism. Imperialism is oppression, and nations exposed to this policy are our natural allies. If the issue of self-determination were to become the centerpiece of our strategy, we would mobilize not only all the oppressed nations but also our Western allies and, what is most important, the American nation. . . .

The events in Poland demonstrate the validity of this thesis. The resistance of the Polish nation is a real blow to Soviet military power. The Soviet military understands very well that with such a "hinterland" it will be very difficult to wage a war, the more so because the leaders know that altogether 200 million people (the nations of Eastern Europe and the non-Russians in the Soviet Union proper) have the same attitude toward the Soviet empire. Mr. Podhoretz advocates fighting Communism. The Poles do not accept Soviet dictates as to what kind of system they should have. Will the U.S. now come and prescribe what kind of socioeconomic system the Poles should have? Is this what we have to offer? Or take the Ukraine. If the Ukraine were freed from Soviet imperialism, even if it remained Communist, it would not be part of the Soviet military potential and the Soviets would be unable to pursue their policy of imperialist expansion and war.

We know very well from past experience that a monolith never existed in the Soviet bloc, not even in the Soviet Politburo. There are Communists who oppose the policy of militaristic fetishism that absorbs more than 20 percent of the Soviet GNP and leads—even apart from the inefficient planned economy—to an impoverishment of the country which may, one day, have most dangerous political consequences. We must make use of all these internal contradictions as well as of the strong centrifugal forces within the Soviet empire by using the weapon that is most dangerous to the Soviets and most consistent with our democratic and humanistic traditions: the principle of the self-determination of nations. Once the U.S. stands for the principle of self-determination it will again become the trusted leader of the free world. Moreover, the American people would be willing to bear sacrifices if they knew they were fighting against imperialistic aggression. . . . Up until now the policy of détente supported the oppressors and the mortal enemy of the U.S. and the free world. Why not stop this suicidal policy and begin to support the oppressed nations, our natural allies, who in turn will help us in the fight against a common enemy? . . .

Finally, let us learn from the mistakes of the cold war and of détente and call the Soviet Union what it in reality is—an imperialist power. We have not yet tried to fight Soviet imperialism and we have not yet formulated a strategy for peace and freedom. But I am afraid that I have already transcended the scope of a letter to the editor and have no more space to propose concrete recommendations for such a strategy.

EUGEN LOEBL.
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I was most interested to read in Norman Podhoretz's article that "human rights have invariably fared worse under Communism than under the regimes it has replaced."

Is it Mr. Podhoretz's view, then, that human rights are more threatened in East Germany today than they were under Adolf Hitler? And is it really his position, assuming that the most basic human right of all is the right to eat, that Communist China compares unfavorably with China under Chiang Kai-shek?

JOHN E. MORBY
California State University
Hayward, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I would like to compliment Norman Podhoretz on his clear recognition of the danger that a strategy of containment which defines the problem as Soviet expansionism alone will lead almost surely to a Soviet-dominated world.

Mr. Podhoretz recognizes the central importance of the ideological stakes of conflict. Consequently, it becomes very puzzling as to why Mr. Podhoretz is willing to shower Robert W. Tucker with encomiums for supporting a policy of "modest containment" against Soviet expansion, limited to Western Europe and Japan (see Tucker's article, "Beyond Détente," COMMENTARY, March 1977). Such a pol-

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icy would undermine everything that Mr. Podhoretz stands for. Tucker has made it very clear that, with the exception of the Persian Gulf, the expansion of Communist states in the Third World does not threaten the vital interests of the United States. . . .

Thus, Tucker is dismayed by the prospect of "an America everywhere resurgent and activist" (*Foreign Affairs*, Winter 1980). He argues that outside the Persian Gulf we should view the extension of Soviet influence in the Third World with "relative detachment." . . .

In fairness to Mr. Podhoretz, I believe he does recognize and he does face squarely the main thrust of Tucker's position. For Mr. Podhoretz raises the question: what if the American people will not allow us to follow Tucker's strategy of abandoning our global responsibility? As Mr. Podhoretz says: "The obvious answer is that we will have to adopt a strategy aimed at containing the expansion of Communism." This is a courageous and forthright statement of the foundation of American foreign policy.

DAVID S. LICHTENSTEIN
Rockville, Maryland

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In "The Future Danger" Norman Podhoretz implies that the United States could, and possibly should, have won the war in Vietnam but was "unwilling to pay the price of victory." Had we "won," I imagine the final communiqué might have read something like this: "We had to destroy Vietnam in order to save it."

Mr. Podhoretz continues his observation by stating that we were "therefore doomed to lose the war and suffer consequent political damage both at home and abroad." This is correct, but had we "won," the damage would have been much greater.

WALTER A. SHELDON
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Norman Podhoretz's piece is a brilliant review and analysis of America's posture in this dangerous world. I would, however, like to demur from the support he expresses for Hans J. Morgenthau's position on Vietnam.

Our intervention in Vietnam was as timely as our intervention in Greece and Korea. Lack of understanding of Communism on the part of our political and intellectual leaders was responsible for our defeat in Vietnam. The war could have been won easily if victory had been our objective. The Communist cry that the war was a civil war was largely a hoax, but it was a hoax that was salable.

It seems so obvious that a military effort directed at crippling or disorienting a Communist aggression should be aimed at the heart of Communist power, which in Vietnam was Hanoi. . . .

Immediately following the Tet offensive in 1968 the American people were polled on the question of an all-out effort to win the war; over 80 percent responded positively. While Tet was a military defeat for the Communists, it was also a psychological victory for them. Most of the influential press plus television and radio lunged at the chance to proclaim Vietnam the wrong war in the wrong place at the wrong time. Anyway, it was a matter that belonged to the Vietnamese. The worldwide Communist apparatus gave us this line, and . . . the self-proclaimed moralists and many intellectuals proclaimed it also. Morgenthau was part of the group.

All was not lost in Vietnam. Our no-win policy made the Communists pay a heavy price for victory, but more importantly it bought us time. All of Southeast Asia would probably have collapsed into the arms of Communism if the North Vietnamese victory had come early and easily. Almost certainly Indonesia would now be Communist if our Vietnam effort had not been made. Even Japan, which was trying its political wings at the beginning of the 1960's, might have been disastrously jolted if the Communist takeover had not been delayed for more than a decade.

Yes, the Vietnam effort even in defeat brought us dividends. Communism has written a horror story in Southeast Asia. It is the modern barbarism. Its rhetoric has little or no appeal today. We have had to wait for those who couldn't or wouldn't see the realities to catch up. At long last forces seem to be forming internally and externally that can and will successfully challenge Communism. . . .

ROBERT G. RISK
Indianapolis, Indiana

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

With a few relatively minor reservations, I found Norman Pod-

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horetz's "The Future Danger" one of the most brilliant and compelling articles on foreign affairs that I have read in many a day. Not the least of its merits is its firm grounding in morality and in the basics of democracy and national security.

The article weaves together the international threats of Soviet expansionism, Finlandization, and Communist totalitarianism. These are aided and abetted by domestic varieties of obfuscation, soft-headedness, and misrepresentation that convert these threats into innocent actions of neutrality. . . .

To emphasize the point I refer to my experience in the teachers' union, locally and nationally (I am a past president of the United Federation of Teachers and the American Federation of Teachers). Some decades ago we were confronted by an organized Communist caucus which paralyzed the union. The caucus was strengthened by innocents and by not-so-innocents who saw no threat in Communist control. For a few years some of the democratic groups, in desperation, actually did surrender. One hopes we will not do the same on the international scene.

My first reservation is not, strictly speaking, a reservation, but an expansion of Mr. Podhoretz's point about "the corruption of key terms like *freedom* and *democracy* by Marxist thought and Communist praxis." It is essential that we restore the distinction between the terms *Communism* and *socialism*, a distinction that has been well-nigh obliterated by those who are ignorant, slipshod, or willfully desirous of providing an aura of innocence to the machinations of Communism. The way people, especially in the media, almost universally refer to the "socialist" countries of Eastern Europe and of the so-called Third World is a paramount case in point. . . .

My second reservation is a factual one. Mr. Podhoretz states accurately that the Socialist International (SI) has "thrown its support behind" leftist movements abroad. He is only partly accurate when he says the same thing about the SI "representing the social-democratic parties of the West." In our own country, this is true of the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee (DSOC), headed by Michael Harrington. But it is definitely not true of the Social Democrats, USA (SD), headed by Bayard Rustin. The SD, while affiliated with the SI, opposed the Sandinistas in Nicaragua and the leftist guerrillas in El Salvador, as well as, unofficially, SWAPO in Namibia. . . .

CHARLES COGEN
American Federation of Teachers
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Norman Podhoretz's "The Future Danger" is a cogent and timely call for adoption of an American foreign policy that should have been self-evident for many years. Sadly, what can most charitably be described as a chronic case of wishful thinking by successive American policy-makers has dangerously postponed this exigent task. . . .

Mr. Podhoretz has not, however, been lulled into the mistaken belief that the inauguration of Ronald Reagan has rendered this issue moot. It is no doubt true that the Reagan foreign policy, in virtually whatever shape it takes, will represent an improvement over the abject pusillanimity posing as "mature restraint" which was the cachet of the exasperating Carter years. However, instead of "hitting the ground running," the Reagan foreign-policy team has thus far displayed a penchant for disorderly factiousness and, more disturbingly, continuation of the status quo which the voters so resoundingly repudiated last November.

To cite two prime examples not mentioned by Mr. Podhoretz:

On *Meet the Press* on March 29, Secretary of State Haig was asked whether he believed that the United States and the Soviet Union could peacefully coexist or whether the differences between the two countries were so wide as to be unbridgeable. The Secretary answered that he felt the question to be "irrelevant." An administration in which the designated chief formulator of American foreign policy can make such a bizarre evaluation of the crucial issue confronting this country merits vigilant scrutiny. Moreover, the earlier role of the Secretary of State as the protégé of the architect of détente should be of more than passing interest to citizens who share the views of Mr. Podhoretz.

Then there is the question of the lifting . . . of the limited agricultural embargo of the Soviet Union. Curiously, the historical origin of this embargo in the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, from which no withdrawal whatever is yet foreseeable, generally has gone unremarked. The rationale for resuming normal trade relations has been shifted to one of providing a carrot to the USSR for its magnanimous abstention from the invasion of Poland—so far. This display of the putative Republican hard-line approach is especially ominous in terms of precedent: one shudders to think of the tribute the Reaganauts would agree to pay the Soviets if they should threaten to invade West Germany or another ally and then, in still another gesture of their overriding good will and peace-loving nature, relent.

If the persuasive exposition of the case in "The Future Danger" is insufficient to stem the tide of such folly, at least we will have duly earned our demise.

THOMAS A. HEALY
Rochester, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

"The Present Danger" elicited my enthusiastic response. While I also agree with the main thrust of "The Future Danger," I question the assumption that President Reagan's electoral victory represented "a new consensus," a climax to "arguments which had been raging in the United States for the past decade or so." It is my distinct impression that during the past decade, with a few notable exceptions, our leadership and the majority of our people have been content to accept détente at face value.

The Reagan victory was largely a negative reaction to President Carter's failed administration. Millions of voters stayed away from the polls and many who voted simply skipped the presidential column in reaction to their frustration over the choice of candidates.

Other factors besides the foreign-policy issue entered into the electoral equation. There were those who could not accept the notion that our economic ills could be solved by making the rich richer and have the wealth trickle down to those at the bottom of the economic ladder; or that abortions should be available only to those who could pay the price; or that peace in the Middle East can be secured by appeasing the Saudis through the sale of our most sophisticated weapons which they can transfer to their Arab allies who seek the destruction of Israel.

We have a long way to go even as we begin to understand the challenge confronting us. We will have

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to dig deeper for a way out of our dilemma than simply spending additional billions on military hardware.

As a starter, may I suggest that before we ask the youth of America to submit to compulsory military training, we should at the very least place a lid on profits to be gained from the production of weapons of war. The proposed steep increase in our military budget should be accompanied by a new Truman-type congressional investigation to guard against unconscionable profits.

Unless we can achieve a truly patriotic national effort, we are doomed to a repetition of the Vietnam experience and the ultimate loss of our freedom as well.

GEORGE FIELD
Kennett Square, Pennsylvania

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Norman Podhoretz gains little credibility by quoting Paul Nitze's assessment of a U.S.-Soviet nuclear exchange. This assessment is in sharp contrast to one made by General David Jones, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff: "There is too much pessimism about our current capability. I would not swap our present military capability with that of the Soviet Union. . . ."

How can Mr. Nitze rationalize the Soviets' comparative invulnerability, when military analysts contend that 400-500 equivalent megatons of nuclear warheads could wipe out 70 percent of Soviet industry, and upward of 100 million people?

The destruction of Russia's urban population would mean the end of the Soviet Union. And let's not talk of evacuation. With no cities to return to—without shelter and food—the chances for survival would be minimal.

In his calculations of Soviet losses, Nitze ignores the lethal fallout which would be created by the explosions of as many as 10,000 U.S. nuclear warheads which, as the Mt. St. Helens eruption demonstrated, can be carried for thousands of miles.

Some years ago General Curtis LeMay warned that the U.S. had the means to "depopulate vast areas of the earth's surface, leaving only vestigial remnants of man's material works."

Striking even relatively few targets would destroy the Soviets' meager transport system as well as energy, maintenance, and management facilities essential for postwar recovery. Moreover, unlike the U.S., a badly wounded Russia would be confronted by rebellious satellites and minority populations, as well as a possible Chinese attack.

Clearly, an all-out nuclear exchange would liquidate both the U.S. and the USSR as organized national entities. . . .

GEORGE OTT
Corvallis, Oregon

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Norman Podhoretz urges more aggressive deployment of an undeveloped weapons system: "ideological and psychological warfare," or "the war of ideas." . . . What should be noted is that psychological warfare, as an American weapons system, is in a far greater state of disarray than any of our other weapons systems. In addition, none of the specialized intelligence organizations which would be required to service an operational psychological warfare system currently exists. . . .

"The Future Danger" ends by urging an anti-Communist strategy upon our government. In my opinion, the new Reagan administration is prepared to pursue such a strategy. To do so, it is desirable to deploy all the weapons possible in the coming critical decade while our traditional weapons systems are being rebuilt. Psychological warfare, in spite of the limitations mentioned above, could be rebuilt within a much shorter time span than other weapons. But its rebuilding would require a presidential decision, congressional appropriations, a sympathetic cabinet, and support by leadership voices among the media. And it should also be firmly kept in mind that, without doubt, an inspired opposition would surely arise to make a serious effort to destroy or emasculate the undertaking. . . .

FREDERICK W. WILLIAMS
Pompano Beach, Florida

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . One can only applaud Norman Podhoretz's clarion call for everlasting vigilance against the Communist malignancy. For far too long the shrill apologists for the new barbarism of the East have held center stage and attempted to blind us to the true nature of the evil which threatens us. . . .

The moral myopia of the liberal establishment is characterized by a constant harping on the supposed misdeeds of the United States along with a minimizing of the most blatant Soviet infractions of civilized behavior.

The future danger can only be faced by an alert and motivated citizenry, and Mr. Podhoretz's lucid and incisive article draws our attention to the task.

PETER C. REIN
St. Louis, Missouri

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Congratulations on "The Future Danger." I like it partly because I have been trying for years to advance some of the same warnings. It has been some years since Soviet Admiral Gorschov gave us plain notice that his country planned to use sea power for world domination. Mr. Podhoretz has gone beyond what I was trying to tell people and has argued that the confrontation is between us and Communism, not just Russian imperialism. . . .

Will the country now have the sense and the guts to heed the warning Mr. Podhoretz and some others have been sounding? I am not sure. Our thinking has become so muddled that a clear and simple call is in itself suspect. . . .

LORING W. BATTEN, III
Port Washington, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . I believe "The Future Danger" is the most lucid and compelling treatise I have yet seen on the subject of Soviet intentions and the militant myopia concerning them which prevailed throughout the previous decade in this nation. . . .

DONALD A. CHRISTMAN
Wyckoff, New Jersey

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

This is to congratulate Norman Podhoretz on "The Future Danger." His articles are always superb, but this one is awesome. . . .

Let me add one small point on how to deal with Soviet military superiority. Unlike Hitler, who enjoyed war . . ., the Soviets do not take risks. They will use force whenever success is absolutely certain, but they will hold back if challenged. Every time the West showed its teeth, as in the Berlin blockade or the Cuban missile crisis (alas, I can think of no other cases), the Soviets backed down. For example, despite all the clichés the Soviets always spout about "elementary norms of international be-

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havior," they never breathed a word when President Kennedy obviously violated international law by declaring a U.S. air and naval quarantine to prevent arms shipments to Cuba. Instead, they developed a very healthy respect for him.

The Soviets respect military strength (which the U.S. has lost) and ideological strength (which Mr. Podhoretz proposes), but I would like to add that they also respect plain spine—I myself saw little examples of this many times when I lived behind the Iron Curtain, though I would not want to say how far one can go before courage becomes foolhardiness or insanity. I feel that the Soviets are basically cowards who respect those who stand up to them, even if their opponents are weak. They kick the kickable, but do not know how to deal with the courageous. . . .

PETR BECKMANN
Boulder, Colorado

NORMAN PODHORETZ writes:

The main practical issue raised by the letters above is whether it is wise or unwise for the United States to build up Communist China as part of a strategy aimed at the containment of Soviet imperialism. This question in turn gives rise to the theoretical problem of the proper role of ideology—or more concretely, anti-Communism—in the framing of American foreign policy. In "The Future Danger" I called attention to the risks of the alliance with China and of a blurring of the anti-Communist theme; my critics call attention to the risks of failing to play the China card and of giving anti-Communism priority over traditional considerations of *Realpolitik*.

Since "The Future Danger" was published, the Reagan administration, by agreeing to sell arms to Communist China, has removed whatever uncertainties still remained as to the direction in which it would go. Therefore, for the moment at least, my critics will be getting their way. I can only hope that they are right in discounting the risks I confess I continue to see in such a strategy despite the cogency and persuasiveness of many of the arguments they make in its defense. (For a good example of the opening the China card has given to those who oppose even the anti-Soviet version of containment, see the *New Yorker*'s lead editorial in "Talk of the Town," July 6, 1981.)

Speaking of China, John E. Morby is in the unhappy position of people in the West who went on defending Stalin even after Khrushchev had confirmed the charges of the anti-Stalinists. It is true that the largest recorded famine in history occurred in China in 1928, but it is also true that the Chinese Communists themselves have now revealed that Western intellectuals were duped by the claims made under Mao that he had abolished hunger and famine. As Jonathan Power recently wrote in the *International Herald Tribune:*

> Today we know, on the authority of the Chinese themselves, that Mao's own policies upset the rural applecart, that the communes were in the main ineffectual agents of economic advance, and that although there were parts of the country (that were shown to outside visitors on the Chinese version of Cook's tours) with great agricultural success, there were many other parts of China where the crops often failed, rural progress was lethargic, and hunger a common condition.

As for whether East Germany is worse off under Communism than it was under Nazism, this is like asking if it is better to be deprived of all freedom in the name of Stalin or in the name of Hitler. German Jews were certainly worse off under Nazism than they would have been under Communism if any Jews had been left in East Germany to live under Communism. But hard cases make bad arguments as well as bad law, and this grisly calculus does nothing to affect the validity of my point that where the only realistic choices are between an authoritarian regime and a totalitarian one—as in South Korea today or South Vietnam yesterday—the interests of the people involved as well as loyalty to human rights forbid doing anything that would lead to the replacement of the authoritarian regime by the totalitarian alternative.

Griffith & Coppola

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In his otherwise masterly article on Abel Gance's *Napoleon* ["Napoleon Conquers America," April], Richard Grenier writes: "As history the film lies somewhere between Parson Weems's George Washington with his cherry tree ('I cannot tell a lie') and D.W. Griffith's *The Birth of a Nation,* in which the cause of the Civil War is shown to be Abraham Lincoln's having a mulatto mistress. . . . A modern French audience would take Gance's Napoleon about as well as a modern American audience would take Griffith's Abraham Lincoln."

Well. *The Birth of a Nation* is badly skewed history, but I don't recall it suggesting anywhere that the Civil War was caused by Lincoln's having a mulatto mistress. Aside from the fact that his Lincoln is a heroic figure, even Griffith wouldn't have dared give Honest Abe a mistress of any color. No, the mulatto mistress belonged to the radical Abolitionist Senator Thaddeus Stevens (the Hon. Austin Stoneman in the movie, played by Ralph Lewis in a fright wig). In the last reel when drunken black soldiery take the town, she double-crosses Stoneman by delivering his daughter, Elsie (Lillian Gish at her most virginal), into the lusting hands of Stoneman's protégé, the black leader, Silas Lynch. Gagged and bound, Elsie is subjected to Lynch's loathesome embraces while he prepares for a forced "marriage." But just in time's nick, her true love, "The Little Colonel" (H. B. Walthall), thunders into town at the head of his Ku Klux cavalry and decency is restored.

So Homer nodded and Grenier goofed. But I still think he's our best practicing movie critic/historian. In pieces like "'The Uniforms That Guard Us'" [May], "The Aging of the New Wave" [February], and "Screen Memories from Germany" [June 1980] he displays the qualities I look for in a critic: a clear, easy style; a knowledge of cinematic history and of history in general; a broad cultural background; critical acumen and high standards.

DWIGHT MACDONALD
East Hampton, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

As the person responsible for bringing Abel Gance's *Napoleon* to the attention of Francis Coppola, and for producing the presentations at Radio City discussed by Richard Grenier in "Napoleon Conquers America," I would naturally disagree with Mr. Grenier's thesis that the cheering crowds at the Music Hall "were cheering to a large extent for Napoleon himself," in a dangerous display of misplaced patriotism or national-

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Babies, Strikes and Compulsory Unionism Don't Mix.

Marlene Swanson, R.N., is a dedicated nurse who takes care of newborn babies, many of them premature, most of them black and Hispanic, and all of them in need, at a community hospital outside Providence, Rhode Island.

When an illegal strike was called, Marlene refused to join it. She crossed the picket line and reported to work because, as she says, "Nurses take the Hippocratic oath too, like doctors. I felt a moral responsibility to those infants."

Angry union officials immediately retaliated. Marlene, along with the other nurses at the hospital, had been forced to join the union to keep her job. This compulsory union membership, union officials claimed, made all nurses subject to fines for any disobedience of their decisions.

They charged Marlene Swanson with violating union by-laws, held a sham "trial," and fined her $250 for taking care of her infant patients during the strike. When Marlene appealed the fine to the union membership, they increased it to $300!

An undaunted Marlene refused to pay the fine, and the union took her to court. At first, she didn't know where to turn for the legal help she urgently needed. After all, she was just one member against the entire Rhode Island State Nurses Association.

Then she remembered reading about William F. Buckley, Jr.'s legal battle against a union, and called his office. She was referred to the National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation, which agreed to provide counsel.

A defense was prepared and presented so effectively that the union suggested the case could be settled out of court if Marlene would give the fine to charity. She flatly refused "because a lot of other nurses were watching to see what happened to me. I could not admit I was guilty of anything."

A judge of the Rhode Island Superior Court emphatically agreed, handing down a directed verdict against the union and for Marlene Swanson. Judge Clifford J. Cawley ruled that state public policy was quite clear that strikes by nurses were illegal, and that it is the "zenith of asininity" to fine anyone for failure to take part in an illegal strike.

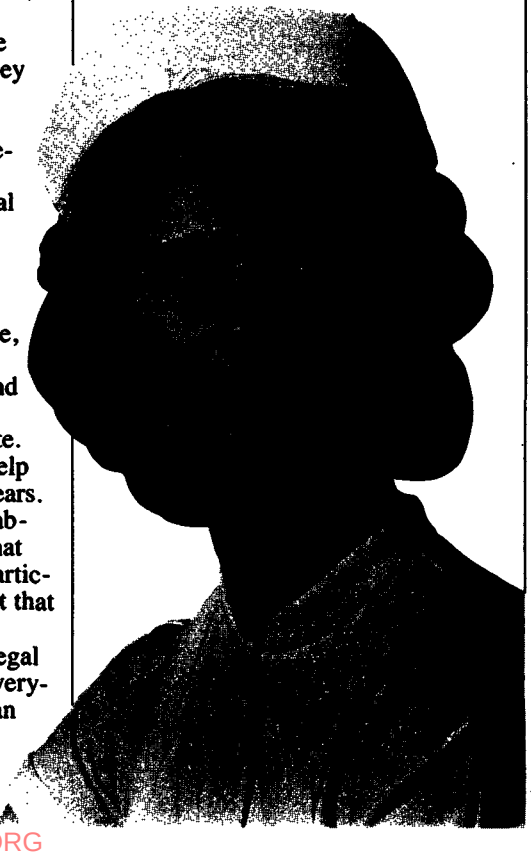
The importance of Marlene's victory became quickly apparent. When another illegal strike occurred at the hospital, not just one, but 18 nurses crossed the picket line, putting their patients first and their union second.

Marlene Swanson was fortunate. She received experienced legal help in a case that lasted nearly two years. She would not have won and established an important principle—that nurses cannot be compelled to participate in an illegal strike—without that expert legal assistance.

The National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation is helping everyone it can—currently in more than 100 cases involving illegal union political spending, violations of academic and political freedom, union violence, and other abuses of basic employee rights.

If you'd like to help people like Marlene Swanson, we'd like to hear from you.

The National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation
8001 Braddock Road
Springfield, Virginia 22160



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ism. Of course Gance presents a romantic simplification of the historical Napoleon in his film. To attack the film on this level is about as silly as protesting Errol Flynn's *Adventures of Robin Hood* as giving a dangerously false image of life under feudalism. The crowds at Radio City and at our subsequent presentations across the country have been cheering the theatrical excitement generated by a visually impressive silent movie presented with flair in spectacular movie-palace settings, and enhanced by a rousing score performed live by a full symphony.

However, I am not writing to offer a detailed rebuttal of Mr. Grenier's criticisms of Gance's masterwork. It's normal and predictable that one or two critics would react to the popular and critical success of a film event like the *Napoleon* revival with belated against-the-grain polemics.

What prompts this letter is Mr. Grenier's announcement that Francis Coppola will soon present a revival of Leni Riefenstahl's *Triumph of the Will*. This statement by Grenier is a vicious fabrication, and coming as it does in the pages of a Jewish publication, amounts to the sleaziest kind of character assassination. At no time has Coppola or anyone at Zoetrope contemplated any involvement in *Triumph of the Will*. I am shocked that COMMENTARY did not have the decency to check such an ugly assertion before allowing it into print.

In his attempt to smear Coppola as a proto-fascist, Mr. Grenier lumps Hans-Jürgen Syberberg's *Our Hitler—A Film from Germany* with *Napoleon* and *Triumph of the Will* as three "neglected masterpieces . . . he [Coppola] has discovered so far." *Our Hitler* was made in 1977, and was released by Zoetrope in 1979 not as a "forgotten" film but as a new film.

The "list" of recent Coppola releases that Mr. Grenier asserts "speaks for itself," presumably to brand Coppola as a right-wing menace, includes, aside from *Napoleon* and *Our Hitler*, Akira Kurosawa's *Kagemusha*, Jean-Luc Godard's *Every Man for Himself*, and Kidlat Tahimik's *The Perfumed Nightmare*. Our next *Francis Ford Coppola Presents* attraction, rather than *Triumph of the Will*, will be *Street Angel*, a classic Chinese film made in Shanghai in 1937 and virtually unknown in the West.

Getting back to Abel Gance, the account of his career after *Napoleon* is distorted by Mr. Grenier's need to paint Gance as a hero-mongering hack. Only someone who has done no research could claim that "Gance's only success in the last fifty years has been his *Austerlitz*": true, it's about Napoleon again, but artistically and commercially it was one of Gance's biggest failures. Because it contradicts his argument, Mr. Grenier ignores Gance's greatest success of the sound era—well-known to all film historians—*J'Accuse* (1937), which is a passionately anti-nationalistic anti-war film.

TOM LUDDY

Zoetrope Studios
San Francisco, California

RICHARD GRENIER writes:

I must thank Dwight Macdonald for his compliment. Since he himself possesses so conspicuously all those critical qualities he generously attributes to me, I can only hope I live up to his description. Mr. Macdonald is of course right about who had the mulatto mistress in *The Birth of a Nation*.

After Mr. Macdonald's praise, Tom Luddy certainly brings me back to earth. I am distressed, I must say, by his language. "Proto-fascist," "vicious fabrication," "sleaziest kind of character assassination." It leads me to think Mr. Luddy is not accustomed to civil discourse. Moreover, what is a proto-fascist? The earliest form of fascist? A precursor of fascism? Is Mr. Luddy suggesting I have accused Francis Coppola of having been a fascist before Mussolini's march on Rome? Mr. Luddy also appears to feel that certain things published in a Jewish publication are sleazy, which published elsewhere would not be, which is a view not without savor as those things go. I shall nonetheless attempt to give Mr. Luddy satisfaction, although it may be difficult.

Let him first be assured that I do not think now, nor have I ever thought, that Francis Coppola is a fascist, proto- or otherwise. I think, what is more, that Coppola is a film-maker of very great gifts. I believe he does not always understand these gifts, and sometimes misuses them, but it is the role of the artist to create, and the critic to criticize.

Now I am perfectly prepared to believe the report that Francis Coppola would soon be presenting *Triumph of the Will* was quite erroneous. Perhaps it was a misconstruction of Coppola's presence at the Telluride Festival a few years ago when Miss Riefenstahl's film won such a tremendous ovation, a false parallelism with Gance's *Napoleon*, whose turn came in 1979. Mr. Luddy might be interested to hear that I consider *Triumph of the Will* a masterpiece. But even he should realize that the mere subtraction of *Triumph of the Will* (a documentary on Hitler's first Nuremburg Congress) from my "list" hardly demolishes my point. As I first wrote it, of the first three films presented by Coppola, two were about Hitler and one about Napoleon. I am merely down one Hitler. It is now one Hitler and one Napoleon.

In case Mr. Luddy is shaky on history, I should inform him that Napoleon is not normally called a fascist, even a proto-fascist. When I said the list "would seem to speak for itself," I plainly meant that there was a link between the two men which, in my opinion, told us something about Coppola. What ever could this link be? Mr. Luddy must try to remain calm. Napoleon and Hitler were both great conquerors, great war leaders, and I think Coppola has a tendency to admire this sort of man powerfully. This is not necessarily disreputable. It was true of the author of the *Chanson de Roland*, an early form of which was sung before the Battle of Hastings to the army of William the Conqueror. I wonder if, in going from *Patton* to Colonel Kilgore in his *Apocalypse Now*, Coppola might not have been violating his true temperament.

Mr. Luddy is tedious on Abel Gance's *Napoleon*. If he thinks the film's material—the stuff of which nations are made—is comparable to that of Errol Flynn's *Adventures of Robin Hood*, I can do nothing for him. I will not rebut him on Gance's career. He misquotes me, and is alternately wrong and irrational. He misrepresents me throughout his letter, in fact. I wrote that "anyone with a true scholar's interest in the development of cinema technique should see Abel Gance's *Napoleon*," but that Gance's career after *Napoleon* was pitiable. I stand by both statements.

But I am more interested now in the temperament of Francis Coppola, whose career is not pitiable in the least. I would like to

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evoke this temperament from some interesting plans of Coppola, and in case Mr. Luddy is preparing to deny them, they were at least reported in an interview in the Los Angeles *Weekly*. Coppola, it seems, is preparing to make a movie of Goethe's *Elective Affinities*. It will run sixteen hours, take ten years to make, and will contain a sequence showing the birth of the universe in moving holography. It will be shown at a special theater holding 2,000 seats built at the top of the Rocky Mountains. Customers will have to drive up to see it as part of a special "weekend event." They will stay at a special hotel built under the movie house. Not getting enough of the movie in a mere sixteen hours, they will be able to play their favorite sequences on the television sets in their rooms "over and over again."

Forget Napoleon. Forget Hitler. Are you getting the feel of the man? Are you with me, Mr. Luddy?

Pogrebinland

To the Editor of Commentary:

It is disappointing and misleading to write a parody of a book review in order to undermine an author's serious thesis. Joseph Adelson [Books in Review, May] ridicules Letty Cottin Pogrebin's effort in *Growing Up Free* to create a non-sexist environment for children. His review reflects the very attitudes that so graphically confirm the importance of what she is saying. The joke is really on the reviewer.

Diane S. Isaacs
Women's Studies and Afro-American Studies
University of Minnesota
Minneapolis, Minnesota

To the Editor of Commentary:

Joseph Adelson's "Letty in Pogrebinland" is a stroke of genius. I have never had so much fun reading a book review.

Nick Eberstadt
Cambridge, Massachusetts

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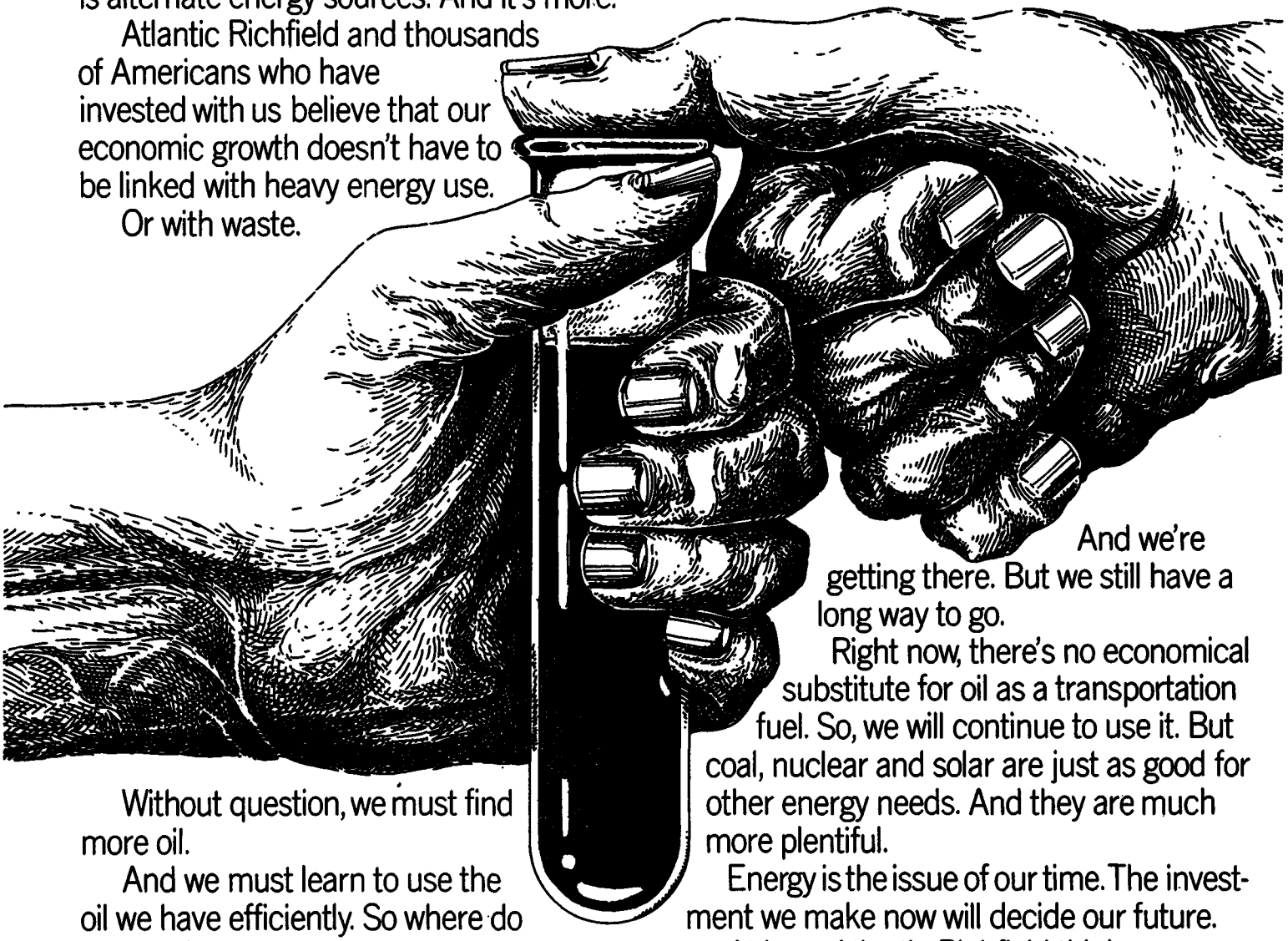

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Hollanditis: A New Stage in European Neutralism

Walter Laqueur

HOLLAND has long been known as an exemplary country, sober, industrious, tolerant, a country whose people had to struggle hard for their prosperity against the forces of nature. Dutch politics hardly ever figure on the front pages of the world's press, which, needless to say, is a good sign. Macaulay once said about Dutch political affairs that they were distinguished by a grave, discreet, and judicious conduct. There is a tendency nowadays in Holland to take a low profile—"We are a small nation"—but contrary to the image that this conveys, and contrary as well to widespread belief, Holland is not just a country of cheese and tulips. It has the biggest harbor in the world and three of the world's biggest corporations. Far from declining as the result of the loss of its empire, it has undergone unprecedented economic development since the end of World War II. The foreign trade of Benelux (of which Holland is the senior partner) exceeds not just that of Britain and France, it is bigger even than that of West Germany and Japan. In international organizations one never has to look far for Dutchmen in leading positions.

Nevertheless, solid, substantial, reliable Holland has become one of the weakest links in the Western alliance. Neutrality (or neutralism) has been the traditional orientation of Dutch foreign policy for almost three centuries—as it has been of most of the other smaller European countries. In recent years most Dutch political parties, and above all the churches, have reverted to this traditional pattern, which was confirmed in the parliamentary elections that took place in Holland on May 26 of this year. The trend has been reinforced by a cultural (or pseudo-cultural) revolution. The issues at stake today are not technical, such as the stationing of cruise missiles, which, with a minimum of give-and-take, could easily be solved. The problem is deeper: a desire to keep out of world problems and an aversion to spending money on defense. Nor, needless to say, is it a question only of Holland. For this reason the syndrome is important; clues to understanding it can be found, as usual, in the past.

ABOUT the revolt of the Netherlands against Spain in the 16th century it has been said that it was neither national, nor republican, nor inspired by religion. Some have explained it by reference to the long waves of business cycles, others have interpreted it as a revolt of medieval conservatives against modern absolutism (Spain). But it still remains true that prosperous burghers and satisfied farmers, men about whom the Duke of Alba said that they were a pacific people with no courage, engaged in an eighty-year war, bloody and destructive, a war in which they declared early on that "we recognize no neutrals." The Dutch resented the Inquisition but they would still have put up with Spanish hegemony if Philip of Spain had given them a minimum of self-rule and if he had treated the poor Dutch nobles—the *gueux*—better. But their patience was not limited and having taken up arms they were capable of great feats of courage. Once they had crossed their Rubicon, there was no looking back. In 1609 a truce between Spain and the Dutch republic was concluded and in 1648 *de jure* recognition was given.

The 17th century was the age of religious disputes and political quarrels at home but it was also the period of the great flowering of the arts and a time when the Dutch were masters of world trade. Then a gradual decline set in: France and England became stronger, the national spirit in the Netherlands declined. The desperate "water beggars" turned into rentiers, entrepreneurs became investors, as the historian Johann Huizinga observed.

Having opted for nonalignment, which best served their commercial activities, the Dutch were compelled to give up their neutrality under the pressure first of the French and then of the British. Following the French Revolution the country was occupied and became the "Batavian Republic" and later a French protectorate. Napoleon made his brother Louis King of Holland. When Louis began to identify himself too much with his subjects, Napoleon wrote him contemptuously: "You have neither army nor navy and yet you pretend to be a free and independent state."

WALTER LAQUEUR, a contributing editor of COMMENTARY, is chairman of the Research Council of Georgetown University's Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, D.C. His most recent books are *The Terrible Secret* and *Farewell to Europe*, a novel.

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This takes us to the 19th century when the Netherlands became again a "voluntarily nonaligned country," in contrast to Switzerland and Belgium which (as it was then put) were "compulsory neutrals." But the prospects for the survival of small countries did not seem good, and the cautious Dutch opted for passivity, virtually abstaining from participation in international politics. They got more than a little panicky in 1866 and again in 1870 when their neighbors went to war. Some suggested economic pliability vis-à-vis Germany so as not to give the Prussians a pretext to annex their country. But Bismarck had no wish to seize Holland.

When World War I broke out, Holland remained an island of peace in a world of horrible bloodshed, very much in contrast to its southern neighbor Belgium which was invaded and became the scene of much fighting and destruction. Holland's good luck in the war became a matter of immense satisfaction; as in the case of the Scandinavian countries, it led to a feeling of moral superiority and thus, albeit indirectly, contributed to the tragedy of 1940.

No serious efforts to defend the country were made in the inter-war period. It was generally assumed (first) that Hitler would not violate Dutch neutrality and (second) that if he did, the French led by General Gamelin would promptly dispatch an army corps to save the country, while the British would defend the Dutch East Indies against the Japanese. The debacle of 1940 was later explained by reference to German trickery: German soldiers had allegedly come disguised as mailmen, streetcar conductors, and even as housemaids. Thus the myth of the "Fifth Column" was born. But a few minor German *coups de main* hardly sufficed to explain the German victory. The real explanation was much less dramatic.

Shortly after the German invasion, Van Kleffens, the Dutch foreign minister, bitterly complained that his country had no quarrel with anyone; instead of spending money for armaments it had used it to improve the social status of industrial workers and peasants, to develop the educational system, to build bridges and roads, to reclaim the Zuider Zee. Even the Dutch newspapers had not provoked the Nazis; an editor had been sentenced to pay a fine in 1936 for calling Hitler a liar, and some anti-Nazi literature had been banned. "Why should an innocent people have been attacked? The answer lies with God alone."

The invocation of the Deity did not excuse the stupidity of men. The Dutch—like others—had been blind to the changes which had gone on in the world around them. They had refused to accept the fact that new forces had arisen in Europe which did not respect neutrality. They did not want to believe that a second world war would be quite different in character from the first. Early on in the war, Churchill remarked that each of the European neutrals hoped that if he fed the crocodile enough, the crocodile would eat him last. Churchill had a very bad press in Amsterdam. "We must be an island of peace," the Dutch said, as if it were 1914 all over again, "we are trustees, we have to help the combatants make peace." Neutrality, the Dutch prime minister said, was a "beacon in a dark world." There were a few dissenting voices such as that of Peter Geyl, the great historian, who agreed that Holland should remain neutral but said this was a matter of dire necessity, not of virtue, and that modesty became a country like Holland better than moral arrogance.

The rest of the story is well known: Holland was occupied in a few days in 1940. For Hitler, the violation of neutrality was wholly immaterial: "No one will ask us about it, once we shall have won the war. We shall not explain it as idiotically as in 1914." But Holland had been lost in actual fact many years earlier, and it is unfair to put all blame on the political leadership. As Louis de Jong stresses time and again in his monumental work on the Netherlands during World War II, the spirit of the nation was averse to defense. There was in 1940 not a single tank (though a few had been ordered); the guns dated back to the 1880's; the thirteen divisions which should have been under arms existed on paper only (as did twenty-one divisions in Belgium). The Queen and her consort, who had taken a more realistic view of Hitler and his designs than many ministers, escaped to London. Colijn, who had been prime minister for much of the 1930's, stayed behind and wrote that the country would have "to modify national establishments and institutions in accordance with the German model" and to accept German instructions on political, social, and economic questions.

WHY single out Holland? After all, the other small nations of Europe did not behave any differently. In 1939 Denmark had been ruled for many years by the social democrats and the Radicals, who believed that since the country could not be defended anyway, it was stupid to spend money on defense in the first place. These Danish leaders stood to the very end for disarmament; their representatives in the League of Nations scrupulously refrained from voting for sanctions against the aggressors even though this would have been a mere gesture which was not particularly risky. The press exercised self-censorship. The Danes refused to conclude a Nordic defense treaty for fear of offending Hitler —just as Holland refused up to the outbreak of the war to coordinate its defense efforts with those of neighboring Belgium. In 1939 the Danes signed a nonaggression treaty with Hitler; perhaps they believed that it would save them. When the Germans took over the country in a few hours in April, they did not even bother to depose Stauning, the social-democratic prime minister: there was no need to do so. Soon there were speeches

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about Denmark having to find its place in Germany's New Order.

The melancholy tale of European neutralism in this period ends in a macabre scene which took place in Dublin in early May 1945. Eamon de Valera, prime minister of Eire, accompanied by the secretary to the Department of External Affairs, paid a visit of condolence to the German embassy. As he correctly pointed out, Hitler had been a head of state, and it would have been gross discourtesy not to tender one's sympathy to the representative of a nation with which Eire maintained diplomatic relations. It is a pity the occasion seems not to have been preserved on film, for it would be of great educational value.

Extenuating circumstances can always be stipulated: that it was psychologically impossible for many Irishmen to fight side by side with the British; that Holland and Denmark, Norway and Sweden, were difficult to defend; that, generally speaking, small countries have to exercise prudence and caution in stormy periods of history. But the defeat of 1940 was *not* a foregone conclusion. It is now known from German intelligence reports that Hitler was well aware not only of the lack of military preparedness in Norway and Denmark, Holland and Belgium, but also of the fact that pacifism was widespread in these countries and that determined resistance would not be offered. By contrast, he also knew that the Swiss *would* probably fight, that they had 125,000 men under arms in 1939 and many more in the years after. He could, of course, have occupied Switzerland, but only at a price; at least twenty divisions would have been needed for Switzerland alone, and it so happened that these were always needed elsewhere.

What if the thirteen Dutch divisions, and the Belgian twenty-one, had existed in reality and not just on paper? What if they had been reasonably well-equipped, what if the spirit of the nation had not been averse to defense? It is an interesting question and we may never know the answer. But the Swiss example, in contrast to that of Holland and Belgium, Denmark and Norway, shows that military preparedness is a deterrent to aggression.

By the time World War II ended, neutralism was discredited in the Netherlands, as it was in the other European countries which had been occupied. For twenty years NATO and the cause of European unity had no more faithful supporters than the Dutch. Then, in the middle 60's gradual change once again set in, gathering momentum in the 1970's.

Various reasons have been adduced to explain this change. Up until the late 1960's Holland, like much of Western Europe, had experienced an almost unprecedented economic upsurge; during the 1970's growth was much slower, and the expectations which had been stirred could not be fulfilled. But the real reasons seem to go deeper. Something akin to a cultural revolution took place, as a new generation appeared on the scene for whom the collapse of 1940 and the years of occupation were nothing but dim recollections.

The first manifestations were quaint and even engaging. It all began in 1964 with the showing of *Zo is het . . .* ("This is it . . ."), an irreverent TV program somewhat akin to the British *That Was the Week That Was*. A year later the first naked woman was shown on television. Also in 1964-65 the Provos and the *dolle Minas* (radical feminists) made their appearance in the streets of Amsterdam. "Happenings" began with the anti-smoking campaign of a magician, Robert Grootveld, but their innocent character soon changed and they attracted thousands of young people. There were major demonstrations (such as against the royal wedding), which sometimes turned into pitched street battles. Students occupied the university. Others, dissatisfied with government support for the arts, seized the Rijksmuseum. Poujadist farmers abducted the minister of agriculture. Amsterdam, that city of almost obsessive cleanliness, of sobriety and quiet patriotism, turned into one of the main centers of hippiedom and drugs. The Provos dissolved in 1967, but when an attempt was made to clean up the city in 1970 there was a new crisis, with new street battles which have continued sporadically to the present day.

It would appear that the Netherlands went through a period of restlessness, not perhaps very pleasing aesthetically, nor very productive culturally, but probably inevitable given the rigidity of Dutch social structures and traditional beliefs. Soon, however, political radicalization ensued. The Dutch Labor party—basically social-democratic, pro-NATO, pro-European—was taken over by the New Left. More important still, there were profound changes in both the Catholic and the (Protestant) Reformed Church; both had supported the "new wave" in Holland almost from the beginning, both are now the main force behind the drive toward neutralism.

It is frequently said that Dutch politics, past and present, cannot be understood without reference to religion, and certainly the Dutch used to take their religion very seriously indeed. Voltaire has one of his heroes, Scarmentado, visit the Netherlands just in time to see the Dutch cutting off the head of a venerable old man—van Barneveldt, their principal minister. Moved by pity Scarmentado asks what crimes had been committed. Perhaps the old man had been a traitor to the state? Worse, he is informed, the minister had believed that mankind could be saved by good works as well as by faith. "You realize that if such opinions were to become current, no republic could endure, and that severe laws are needed to repress these disgraceful horrors."

It is true that the Dutch ceased hunting witches earlier than other European nations, but with all their tolerance, strict religious divisions continued

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to prevail. Seventy percent of all schools are confessional; political parties, newspapers, and even radio and TV stations were, and some still are, largely run on confessional lines. Four Protestant parties virtually ruled Holland for sixty years; the Roman Catholics (almost 40 percent of the population) also had their own party (KVP), though for a long time they played no great part in politics.

The Dutch Catholic Church, which had been traditionally one of the most orthodox, at one time all but broke away from Rome. It introduced a new catechism, expressed doubts about original sin, the existence of angels, the virginity of Mary, and, needless to say, the infallibility of the Pope. It opposed the ban against contraception and it opposed celibacy. And as Dutch Catholicism faced a crisis of identity, the very structure of the Dutch system (the existence of confessional parties and trade unions, etc.) became problematic. In 1975 most of the Christian groups, Protestant and Catholic alike, established a new Christian Democratic party (the CDA), a merger that became possible because the Protestant churches had undergone a similar, though perhaps somewhat less far-reaching process of radicalization.

Yet when all the connections between the Dutch churches and Dutch politics have been traced, it remains the case that there is nothing specific to either Calvinist or Dutch Catholic theology propelling these churches toward radical neutralism. In one sense they are part of a worldwide movement. There have been manifestations of radicalism within sections of the Catholic Church in other parts of the globe (cf. the role of "liberation theology" in Latin America), and the World Council of Churches has also become passionately interested in world affairs. If a Pope could once maintain that he knew more about astronomy than Galileo, the World Council certainly thinks that it has a better understanding of world affairs than the politicians. As Philip Potter, its general secretary, declared not long ago over Prague radio (of all places), "We have learned through the experience of our brethren in the socialist countries that our own churches, influenced by the social structures of our own countries, often took side with oppressors. I have understood during my visit to Czechoslovakia, and also during my earlier visits to other socialist countries, that the Christians there are participating in the construction of a just society. . . ."

In the Netherlands the origins of a pacifist movement (*Kerk en Vrede*, Church and Peace) date back to the 1920's. But these facts alone are insufficient to explain the recent conversion. Why should churches which for a long time were not bothered by the slave trade, which showed indifference and indeed neutrality toward National Socialism until very late in the day, become suddenly so acutely aware of their social and political commitments in a world belonging to God? Are these delayed guilt feelings or could the motives be, at least in part, opportunistic in character? A case can perhaps be made for the idea now propounded by the Dutch churches that the traditional Christian doctrine of the just war is no longer valid in the nuclear age. But how to support the Potter thesis that Czech Communism is building a just society—whereas Dutch society (say) is oppressive and unjust?

In the 1960's the Dutch churches seem to have feared that they would lose their hold on the young generation unless they underwent radical changes. Thus, in extreme cases, Jesus reappeared as a hippie preacher, faith was given up for hope, God was jettisoned and replaced by revolution, wars of liberation, and the march into a better future. Admittedly only a few went that far, but many started moving in this general direction.

Despite the transformation, Dutch churches did not fare too well. The Protestant parties suffered substantial electoral losses, and the Catholic party was almost halved. They could have argued that were it not for their "reorientation" they would have disappeared altogether, but this seems doubtful.

Apart from the desire to be "with it," the reorientation in foreign policy owed something to another, very human, factor, which few discussed openly: fear. Although there has been for a long time a strong inclination in Dutch politics to interpret world affairs in moralistic terms, this has usually been tempered by an equal measure of caution. If in the 1930's successive Dutch cabinets, and public opinion in its overwhelming majority, remained neutral as between Hitler and the Western democracies, the main reason was not a belief in the moral superiority of such a position, but, deep down, fear of being overrun by the German tanks. There can be little doubt that the present inclination toward neutralism, in whatever way it is rationalized, stems at least in part from similar fears of the Soviet Union.

THE anti-NATO movement in Holland has certainly gathered momentum in recent years, and if the militants in the Labor party (PvdA) had their way, the country would have left NATO long ago. A year and a half ago the PvdA announced that it was "currently not in favor" of modernization of NATO nuclear arms. A party congress last February went considerably further and accepted a resolution unconditionally rejecting Dutch participation in such a program, which would be resisted through a "popular movement" stimulated and led by the party. There was opposition even to retaining nuclear land mines, weapons that can hardly be used offensively. An even more radical resolution, which would have taken Holland out of NATO, was defeated only because Joop M. den Uyl, the party leader, threatened to resign; without this popular leader the prospects of the party in the forth-

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coming elections would have been greatly impaired.

There are strong anti-nuclear factions in the other Dutch parties as well, excepting only the liberals (People's Party for Freedom and Democracy) who are however not known for their interest in foreign affairs. But the most vocal support still comes from the churches. The interdenominational Church Council and the Catholic *Pax Christi* have made it known that they will rely on democratic means to attain their aims only so long as such means are successful.

How do the churches justify their stand? By reference, paradoxically, to the murder of six million Jews. There are situations, one of its leaders has said, where the church as a church has to speak out against outrage. The historical comparison may not be entirely obvious. A better starting point would be the elitism of Dutch Protestantism. There may well be a link between the concept of Holland as a neutralist (anti-nuclear) "pilot country"—an idea propagated by Dutch politicians—and the concept of the elect in Calvinist theology, according to which after Adam's fall God preserved a certain number of human beings from destruction and destined them to salvation through Christ.

Such quasi-theological arguments have not passed without contradiction. In a recent interview with a Protestant press service, Chancellor Helmut Schmidt of West Germany noted that the churches have never recognized democratic principles as binding and do not do so now. Thus their legitimacy as teachers of political virtue is not altogether above suspicion.*

But the Dutch churches also invoke other arguments. One spokesman has written that since there is now a stable equilibrium between the two camps, West and East, it would not be disturbed by the unilateral neutralism of a small country like Holland. (At the same time the churches hope that Dutch unilateralism would give heart to neutralists in other Western countries—in which case the equilibrium would certainly be upset.)

The Dutch debate does not on the whole proceed with much political sophistication and its participants (with notable exceptions) are not really well informed about the facts of international relations. A Dutch political commentator recently noted that "at bottom the interest in what goes on beyond our borders is slight. Politicians, even experts on foreign affairs, have no idea what is going on in other countries and why." But well informed or not, the trend toward neutralism in Holland is now a fact of political life.

If it were only a question of Holland this "new wave," though an interesting phenomenon, would hardly be one of overwhelming political importance. But it is by now a far wider problem: Holland pioneered the movement but it is no longer alone. Karel van Miert, the leader of the Belgian (Flemish) Socialist party, has deplored the fact that "we have become permanent vassals and nuclear hostages of the U.S. We have become an American protectorate more than ever." If no real agreement is reached with the Russians, he has demanded that the European missiles not be deployed. Like others, van Miert seems to fear not the Soviet missiles which have already been deployed against Europe, only the American missiles which do not exist.

In England, the unilateralist orientation of Michael Foot, the Labor party leader, and of the present majority of the party executive is well known. The Labor party is committed to removing NATO bases from Britain—just as it has announced that if victorious it would quit the European Community. At international Socialist meetings the party is now represented by Alex Kitson, who has made statements over Radio Moscow so zealous in their pro-Soviet ardor as to cause acute embarrassment even to most self-respecting West European Communists.

In West Germany a popular front has arisen during the last year made up of the Green (ecological) party, the Communists, the left wing of the Social Democratic party, and also quite a few intellectuals. This coalition has already exerted considerable pressure on Chancellor Schmidt and is still gaining influence. It is directed against both the military and the peaceful use of nuclear power. Again, one finds sections of the Protestant church giving fervent support to the movement, and expressions of sympathy in the media (more on radio and TV than in newspapers).

The underlying theme is anti-Americanism, the belief that while the Soviet system is not necessarily to be emulated, Russia seems to be right more often these days than the United States. According to Horst Ehmke, a prominent Social Democratic leader, this is nothing but disappointed love: after the war many young Germans believed that America would be instrumental in building a truly new society on earth, free of oppression, exploitation, and power politics. But whatever the mental image of the generation of 1948, it is hardly relevant to the young men and women of 1981 who more often than not have been taught to regard America as the enemy *par excellence*.

Commenting on this mood, Annemarie Renger, a Social Democratic leader and a vice president of the German parliament, has stressed that the strong anti-American feelings in the *Bundesrepublik* are shared by the Left and the far Right (which has recently penetrated the "green" movement); she has drawn attention to the characterization of American consumerism as "creeping fas-

* The present neutralist movement in Europe is restricted, on the whole, to Protestant countries. Schmidt observed in the same interview that there seems to be less faith in God or in the future in Protestant Europe than in Catholic.

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cism," and the inclination among well-known university teachers to belittle and ridicule basic democratic institutions—just as a previous generation had done in the Weimar republic. According to Mrs. Renger, this anti-Americanism has nothing to do with the present incumbents in Washington but goes considerably deeper: it is based on the conviction that as between Russia and America there is not really much to choose; that, on the contrary, Communism because of its "anti-fascist" character may be the preferable system; and that for these reasons Germany's links with America (and the West in general) should be eventually cut. Few, except on the extreme Left and Right, will say these things clearly and uncompromisingly. But about the general trend there can be no two views.

In Denmark, in contrast to Holland, West Germany, and Britain, there has been little public debate over defense, but again the general direction is unmistakable. Even Giscard d'Estaing of France made it known that he was appalled by the defeatist talk of Anker Jörgensen, the Danish prime minister. A freeze on the Danish defense budget would mean that the Danish army would lose one-quarter of its effective strength (which amounts altogether to 20,000 men) and one-third of its ships. Aware of the fact that Denmark and Holland are now the weakest links in NATO, Soviet propaganda has concentrated its activities on these two countries. (Not far behind are the two "independent" Washington think tanks, the Institute for Policy Studies and the Center for Defense Information, both of which have been arranging international conferences, planting articles in the local press, and undertaking other efforts to weaken the alliance.)

NORWAY was, and partly still is, a staunch pillar of Western defense, but there has been a palpable change in that country too within the last year. It began with the publication of *Atomvapen og usikkerhetspolitik* ("Atomic Weapons and the Politics of Insecurity"), a book by a socialist leader named Jens Evensen which came out in favor of Norwegian neutralism on the lines advocated for many years by the Finnish president, Urho Kekkonen. The book and its programs were at first sharply criticized by the ruling Labor party, but then "Women for Peace" and other such organizations got into the act; the leader of that group, Eva Nordland, declared that "if women had their way in running the world, we would never have had nuclear weapons"—an interesting thought in the light of the political record of female leaders like Indira Gandhi, Margaret Thatcher, and Golda Meir, not to mention La Passionaria and Eva Perón.

Thanks to such agitation in Norway, within a short time a "large and once responsible party was reduced to a flock of distracted chickens."* Retreating from its previous position, the Labor party decided to include a plan for a Nordic nuclear-free zone as a major item in its program. To be sure, some suggested that such a nuclear-free zone also include the (Soviet) Kola peninsula with its enormous military installations. Others maintained that the Russians would hardly be likely to pay this price, but advocated instead some Soviet gestures such as a thinning out of the weapons system in the Leningrad military district. Soviet reaction was predictable: the Norwegians were told to mind their own business. Some seemed perfectly content with this answer. The head of the anti-nuclear movement, Eric Alfsen, noted that it was realistic to initiate the plan with the four Nordic countries; since the atomic weapons in the Soviet Union were aimed at targets other than Norway, there was no particular urgency about including the Russians.

The whole debate was reminiscent of a conversation between Alice and the mad hatter; there *are* no nuclear weapons in Norway, or anywhere else in Scandinavia. So why the agitation to abolish what does not exist in the first place? " 'Take some more tea,' the March Hare said to Alice very earnestly. 'I've nothing yet,' Alice replied in an offended tone, 'so I can't take more.' 'You mean you can't take less,' said the Hatter.' "

In mid-March 1981, a meeting of the Scandinavian and Benelux Socialist parties was convened in Oslo to coordinate their efforts in the light of their common (critical) attitudes toward European defense.† The meeting was also attended by representatives of the British Labor party and the German Social Democrats. The British delegates did not have much to say, because they too favor unilateral disarmament. The one Socialist leader who read the riot act to his comrades was the German: without a military balance, he said, there was no hope for détente between East and West, and that balance had been undermined. The German representative was none other than Egon Behr, the most outspoken advocate of *Ostpolitik* among German Social Democrats. The episode showed just how far the Socialist parties of Benelux and Scandinavia have moved on the road to unilateralism.

A curious dichotomy has thus developed in Europe: NATO ministers of defense solemnly affirm in the presence of Reagan administration officials that major efforts will be made to reduce the advantage gained by the Soviet Union in the military field during the last decade. Yet at the same time it emerges that there will be substantial cuts in British defense and the Danish government

* Nils Orvik, *Aftenposten*, February 2, 1981.

† Almost exactly forty years earlier the very same governments had met to consider their common attitude in the early phase of World War II. Through Dr. A. Koht, the Norwegian foreign minister, they conveyed a message to the Western allies that with due respect to the idealism of Churchill and Léon Blum the war against Hitler was a war for power, and in such a war neutrality was the prescribed course for small states.

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coalition debates whether to stick to a "zero solution" or to increase the budget by 1 percent. That less will be spent on defense in France under Mitterrand than under Giscard seems highly likely. But perhaps most ominous of all is the growth of the anti-defense campaign in West Germany. Prime Minister Schmidt announced on several occasions in May that he would resign if the neutralist forces in his party gained the upper hand. Since Schmidt can hardly be considered a hawk—he has been one of the most persistent advocates of détente despite all that has happened in recent years—the stand he has taken shows how far those opposing him have moved from the very concept of a Western defensive alliance. It is no longer a question of deploying this weapon or another, but more fundamentally, of whether the defense of Europe should be continued—or written off.

THE campaign against nuclear weapons (and the use of nuclear energy in general) has been described by sympathetic European observers as an "explosion of fear," and such fears are certainly not misplaced in view of the presence of unprecedented arsenals of destruction. Yet it cannot be taken for granted that, to use the terminology commonly invoked to express the alternatives before Europe, choosing "red" would necessarily preclude being "dead." Even if Europe opted out of the nuclear race it could still be devastated in a nuclear war, and even if America should follow Europe's example there still might be nuclear wars between Communist states, unimpeded by public pressures to ban the bomb. It is not certain, in brief, that unilateral disarmament is a better avenue than multilateral efforts to prevent war. Of course no such argument will impress a pacifist *tout court.*

A case against the continuation of the nuclear arms race could also be made, and is indeed made, by some thoughtful strategists in Europe who have proposed instead a stronger conventional defense. It is true that Europe's (and the West's) desire in the 1950's to have a "cheap" defense helped bring about the present dependence on nuclear weapons and also the stalemate in disarmament negotiations. The Soviet Union meanwhile did not choose the line of least resistance; it continued to strengthen both conventional and nuclear forces and is therefore now in a more powerful position in every respect. But the great majority of the supporters of the anti-nuclear campaign would not back a stronger conventional defense; they are against defense in principle. When a study came out in Holland proposing an increase in spending on conventional forces, members of the peace movement immediately argued that this alternative to nuclear arms would be too costly and that the funds involved could be used for much better purposes.

What sort of world do the unilateralists suppose they face? On rare occasions a fairly realistic picture will be given, such as in a recent editorial of the British *Guardian* (a paper on the whole sympathetic to the "peace" campaign) pointing to Moscow's enormous expansion of its conventional forces:

> It is almost as though Moscow is waiting for the day when unilateralism triumphs in Western Europe to advance along a broad non-nuclear front. The advance does not even have to be military. Without effective defense, which in the face of Soviet ground, air, and sea preponderance would have to be nuclear, Western Europe runs as big a risk as ever of being given the Polish treatment. For apart from Russia's own national interest, history, remember, is supposed to be on the Soviet side.

A genuine pacifist will reply that all this may be true but since the alternative is so utterly horrible, the analysis does not affect his position. Such honesty does not make for good mass politics, however, and is therefore seldom found in publications of the unilateralists. Instead the truth is suppressed, realities are disregarded, promises are made which are clearly fraudulent. Thus, the organ of the Dutch social democrats has hailed a recent speech by Brezhnev, in which the Soviet leader promised exactly nothing, as an epoch-making event that demonstrated the sincerity of Russia's desire to be on good terms with the West. Or again, Jens Evensen, the founder of the Norwegian campaign, has said:

> Naive people have said to me: "You must be one of those who would rather be red than dead." One can smile at such a statement but then I think: let me answer. I have lived a full life and I cannot imagine life under a dictatorship. We must all die, death is as natural as birth, but the question is posed incorrectly. There is a third alternative. We shall be neither red nor dead, we shall fight for disarmament.

The case of E.P. Thompson is also intructive. A Marxist literary scholar, biographer of William Morris, he left the British Communist party some twenty years ago and is now the guru of the West European anti-nuclear movement. No one has spoken and written so eloquently as he about overthrowing the "Satanic Kingdom," about the "mendacity game" of NATO, about the nuclear "language of death." Yet when it comes to the political implications of unilateralism, this Savonarola becomes a supplier of idyllic visions, with sweetness, harmony, and above all symmetry prevailing all around. Thus we are cautioned that each success of a unilateralist kind, "by Holland refusing NATO cruise missiles or by Poland distancing herself from Soviet strategies, will be met with an outcry that it serves the advantage of one or the other bloc." But this outcry must be disregarded, says Thompson; even though initiatives on one side may not be met with instant reciprocity, in the longer run they will reinforce the pressures for

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peace. They "will provide those conditions of relaxation of tension which will weaken the rationale and legitimacy of repressive state measures and will allow the pressures for democracy and détente to assert themselves in more active and open ways."*

The juxtaposition of Holland and Poland is of course not merely ridiculous, it is fraudulent, for Holland—just like any NATO country—may "distance itself" with impunity from American strategies, whereas if Poland or any other East European country distanced itself from Soviet strategies there would not just be an "outcry" but immediate action. No doubt Thompson and his friends would protest such action and no doubt they would continue to speak confidently of "latent support and profound pressures" in the Soviet Union for nuclear disarmament. The political effect would be precisely nil, and they know it. By pretending there is symmetry where there is none, by knowingly holding out false hope, the guru turns charlatan.

How much further will European neutralism advance and what can America do about it? The movement consists at present of various groups. There is a small minority of well-informed people who believe that Western strategy with its great and growing dependence on nuclear arms is basically mistaken and has led to a dead end. There is a somewhat larger minority of Communists, Trotskyites, militant anarchists, and sundry fellow travelers who wish to manipulate the movement so as to bring about the rapid downfall of the Western alliance. There is a majority of confused but well-meaning "troops": idealists in search of a cause, ecologists fearful of irreversible changes on earth and in the atmosphere, churchmen in pursuit of a new faith, young people bored by the absence of genuine challenges and attracted by any movement promising action. There are the products of the permissive age, repelled by sundry trashy subcultures yet also decisively formed by them. There are the anti-Americans of both the far Left and the extreme Right. And there are the many citizens of smaller countries genuinely longing to opt out of world politics. Geography has placed them at the crossroads of history; they are small and vulnerable; and they believe that their prospects of survival would greatly improve if they returned to their traditional neutrality.

The predicament of the smaller states, exposed to icy winds from various directions, is not enviable. These are small peoples but their contribution to civilization has been remarkable. In the speech by Churchill from which I have already quoted he said, "We have the greatest sympathy for these forlorn countries and we understand their dangers," and referred specifically to the Dutch "whose services to European freedom will be remembered long after the smear of Hitler has been wiped from the human path." Yet, while one must sympathize with the situation of a country like Holland, one must also acknowledge that it can no more play the role of a "pilot country" today than it could forty years ago.

The tensions in the Western alliance may be suppressed for some time to come by an aggressive Soviet foreign policy which will make the members of the alliance draw closer together. But this is no certainty, and in any case it will offer only temporary respite. Sooner or later the old conflicts between the U.S. and some of the European allies will again come to the fore. American diplomats are told by their European colleagues that arms talks with Moscow should be resumed immediately, for unless this is done, "unilateralism in Europe will become irresistible." A curious argument, for if unilateralism is indeed so overwhelmingly strong in Europe this cannot have escaped the Russians. What incentive is there then for them to negotiate?

There may be a good case for resuming talks with Moscow, if only to reduce somewhat the domestic pressures on some European governments. A case could also perhaps be made for a radical change in the structure of the alliance: those with misgivings about stationing cruise missiles on their territory could be released from such duties, on condition that they undertake to strengthen substantially their conventional forces. But this would, again, involve higher defense spending, and dozens of reasons will be adduced to prove that this is impossible.

There may be technical solutions to some of the questions which have bothered the Dutch and the other small nations in Western Europe, as well as some of the larger. But there is no American cure for European neutralism. This is an issue for Europe to decide. Attempts on America's part to exert pressure on its European allies may only reinforce the delusion that America somehow has a greater stake in the defense of Europe than the Europeans themselves and that if their territory were invaded, America would come to their rescue, treaty or no treaty. But a duty the United States *does* have is to make it clear that there will be no defense of Europe without European participation. The mistakes of 1940, at the very least, should not be repeated.

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* *Nation*, January 24, 1981.

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Are Jews Becoming Republican?

Milton Himmelfarb

EVERYONE says that it remains to be seen whether the 1980 election was a watershed in American politics. It also remains to be seen whether 1980 was a watershed in the politics of American Jews.*

In 1972 Nixon got more than 60 percent of the vote to Reagan's 51 percent in 1980, and Nixon's margin over McGovern was more than 20 percent to Reagan's 10 percent over Carter. The difference between 1980 and 1972 lies in the new Republican majority in the Senate, in the reduced Democratic majority in the House of Representatives, and above all in the victors' promise and determination to change course. If the Republicans do well again in congressional 1982 and presidential 1984, a new direction and outlook will have been confirmed.

For Jews it might seem overdrawn to speak of 1980 as a possible watershed. What makes 1980 so different from 1972? In 1972 Jews gave about 35 percent to Nixon, in 1980 between 35 and 39 percent to Reagan.

The last figures are from exit polls conducted by the three networks. An exit poll is not the same as an opinion poll. In an exit poll, eight, ten, twelve thousand people are asked to fill out a questionnaire as they leave their voting places, whereas in a typical opinion poll no more than fifteen or sixteen hundred fill out a questionnaire or talk to interviewers. An exit poll includes hundreds of Jews among its respondents, a typical opinion poll only thirty to fifty.

According to the CBS-New York *Times* exit poll, 689 Jews—5.4 percent, twice as many in proportion to voters as in proportion to population—gave Carter 44 percent, Reagan 39 percent, and Anderson 15 percent. (The *Times* reported 45, 39, and 14 percent.) Joining ABC and NBC's polls to CBS's, we get 1,580 Jews, or 4.7 percent. The 1,580 gave Carter 45 percent, Reagan 37 percent, and Anderson 17 percent.

In 1980, therefore, for the first time since 1928 at the latest, most Jews did not vote for the Democrat. In fact, more Jewish men voted for Reagan than for Carter. It was the women's majority for Carter that gave him his Jewish plurality.

In 1972 Jews voted for the Republican about 30 percent less than white Gentiles, in 1980 under 20 percent less. In 1976 NBC reported Jews giving Carter 72 percent—confirmed by ABC in 1980—and in New York State 80 percent. If the Jews of New York State had voted like other whites, let alone other whites of similar age and income, Ford would have taken New York and the Presidency. Black leaders kept reminding Carter that blacks had elected him, but did blacks have a real choice between Democrat and Republican? Jews had a real choice, and they chose the Democrat. By 1980 many were sorry. According to ABC, more than half of the Jews who voted for Reagan had voted for Carter in 1976, if they voted at all in that year. The corresponding fraction of all voters was a quarter.

In 1972 about 15 percent of Jews who usually voted Democratic switched to the Republicans. In 1980 the rise in the Jewish Republican vote would have been greater still if Anderson had not run. White Gentiles, who in the eight presidential elections since 1952 have given a majority to a Democrat only once, in 1964, in 1972 voted two to one for Nixon. In 1980, even without Anderson in the race their Reagan vote would not have reached three to two. *No other group changed so much in 1980 as the Jews.*

When Jews are set on liking a candidate they know how to forget that not once or twice but three times he proposed in the House a Christian America amendment to the Constitution. One of every six voted for Anderson.

Which Jews voted for him most, and which least?

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HIGH ANDERSON VOTERS (CBS)

	Proportion of all Jewish voters	*Anderson vote*
	Percent	
$25,000-$49,999	31	23
30-44 years old	26	22
18-29 years old	19	21
College graduates	44	21

LOW ANDERSON VOTERS

Did not complete high school	6	0
60 years old & older	26	6

Of all independents who told CBS that they were worse off than a year earlier, 65 percent voted for Reagan, while of independents who said that they were better off, 36 percent voted for him.

How did economic interest affect Jewish voting? As income rose, so did the Reagan vote, from the poorer Jews' 30 or 34 percent to the richer ones' 47 percent.

	PERCENTAGE OF JEWISH VOTERS		PERCENTAGE FOR REAGAN	
	ABC	*CBS*	*ABC*	*CBS*
$10,000 or less	8	11	34	30
$30,000 or more	44	—	41	—
$50,000 or more	—	19	—	47

John Stuart Mill respected philosophical conservatism but could not respect what he called practical conservatism. A practical conservative was the passenger in a warm coach who would not let a poor wretch in from the cold. For some years now our preachers have accused American Jews of practical, selfish conservatism.

Poets have their poetic license, and preachers their homiletic license. From CBS's figures we can calculate that while Jews with income of $50,000 or more voted 47 percent for Reagan, others with that income voted 69 percent for him.

Jews are older than others: of all CBS's voters 18 percent were sixty or older, and of its Jews 26 percent. Older people suffer most from inflation, and voters generally thought Reagan the likeliest to tame it. All older voters gave Reagan 54 percent, older Jewish voters 33 percent.

Again, because of the Jews' average age and income, unemployment is less of a problem for them than for others. Yet 41 percent of CBS's Jews, to 39 percent of all its voters, said unemployment was more serious than inflation.

Selfish conservatism? Rather, philanthropic liberalism—which helps to explain why, as in California and New York, many Jews who voted for Reagan also voted to elect liberal Democrats to the House and Senate.

IN PARTY affiliation and political philosophy little was new. ABC and CBS reported 27 or 28 percent of all voters calling themselves Republicans, and 12 or 13 percent of Jews. Among all voters, for every five calling themselves conservatives there were three liberals. Among Jews, for every five conservatives there were ten or fifteen liberals.

	ALL VOTERS		JEWS	
	Percent			
	ABC	*CBS*	*ABC*	*CBS*
Liberal	24	19	45	43
Moderate	37	51	29	43
Conservative	39	31	23	14

Let us test the Jews' asserted liberalism by their stand on the Equal Rights Amendment.

	ALL MEN & WOMEN	ALL WOMEN	JEWISH MEN & WOMEN	
	Percent			
	NBC	*CBS*	*NBC*	*CBS*
Pro-ERA	45	45	69	70
Anti-ERA	36	31	17	18
No answer/not sure	19	24	14	12

Jews favor ERA much more than women do.

Similarly, in sources as diverse as NBC, the Minneapolis *Star* for the Twin Cities, and *A Profile of the Jewish Freshman, 1980,* drawn for the American Jewish Committee by David E. Drew, Margo R. King, and Gerald T. Richardson of the Higher Education Research Institute, we find substantially more Jews than others approving abortion.

Of all CBS's conservatives 4 percent voted for Anderson, of its Jewish conservatives 9 percent. (Caution: this means that 8 people checked the boxes for Anderson, conservative, and Jewish.) On the other hand, CBS's 26 percent of Jewish liberals voting for Reagan is indistinguishable from its 27 percent of all liberals voting for him. Jewish liberals may be more like other liberals than Jewish conservatives are like other conservatives.

More than anything else, foreign and military affairs determined Jewish voting in 1980. CBS asked: "Agree or disagree: 'We should be more forceful in our dealings with the Soviet Union even if it increases the risk of war.' "

	AGREE	DISAGREE	No ANSWER
		Percent	
All voters	54	31	15
Jews	46	41	12

Excluding those who did not answer, we get:

All voters	64	36
Jews	53	47

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Though Jews still were for forcefulness less than other Americans, more of them were for it than against.

	Be More Forceful	Don't Be More Forceful	No Answer
		Percent	
All Jews	46	41	12
Carter voters	37	53	10
Reagan voters	61	26	13
Anderson voters	41	43	16
Of those who answered:			
All Jews	53	47	
Carter voters	41	59	
Reagan voters	70	30	
Anderson voters	49	51	

The seven-to-three hawkishness of Jews who voted for Reagan offset the three-to-two dovishness of those who voted for Carter. Anderson voters divided evenly.

One out of eight Jews did not answer: one out of ten Carter voters, one out of eight Reagan voters, and one out of six Anderson voters. Why was the Jews' no-answer percentage almost as high as that of all American voters, and why was the Jewish Andersonians' percentage even higher?

Normally it is the uneducated who do not answer pollsters' questions. Yet Jews are among the best-educated Americans, and Anderson voters were the best-educated Jews: of all CBS's Jews 74 percent had gone to college, of its Jewish Anderson voters 90 percent. When people like these are silent, they do not fail to answer, they refuse to answer. The question about greater forcefulness must have been too painful. But the very painfulness is instructive, because two or three years earlier their answer would have been easy, and dovish. Their refusal to answer may cover movement toward supporting American forcefulness in foreign affairs.

CBS's Jewish men and women differed startlingly.

	Carter	Reagan	Anderson	Reagan minus Carter
		Percent		
Men (51%)	37	54	7	17
Women (49%)	45	46	7	1
Jewish men (56%)	38	44	16	6
Jewish women (44%)	52	33	13	−19

Reagan's excess over Carter was 16 percent greater among all men than among all women, 25 percent greater among Jewish men than among Jewish women. Jewish men were less different from all men, with a Reagan excess 11 percent smaller, than Jewish women from all women, with a Carter excess 20 percent greater.

A generation ago Jewish men voted less than Jewish women for Adlai Stevenson. The explanation offered was that the women, isolated at home and in their Jewish neighborhoods, and therefore more insulated against Gentile influence, remained more traditional, so to speak, more unquestioning of the commandment to vote for Mrs. Roosevelt's protégés. Less traditional now, and less confined to home and neighborhood, Jewish women nevertheless again seem isolated, only this time among the feminists. Like women generally, feminists tend to be dovish, so they opposed Reagan not only as anti-ERA but also as hawkish. CBS's Jewish women look the same as its pro-ERA women.

	Carter	Reagan	Anderson
		Percent	
Anti-ERA women	29	66	4
Pro-ERA women	54	32	11
Jewish women	52	33	13

Why were women only nine out of every twenty Jewish voters? The ratio should have been higher —higher even than the half of all voters represented by women. Because women live longer, there are more of them who can vote. That is especially true of Jews, with their high median age. Again, educated people vote more, and Jewish women are educated: 65 percent of the Jewish freshmen's mothers went to college, and 36 percent of the other mothers.Yet Jewish women voted less.

Just as the silence of so many Jewish Anderson voters about forcefulness in dealing with the Soviet Union may have covered movement from an earlier dovishness, so the abstention of so many Jewish women from voting may also have covered the beginning of political movement. Democrats who stay away from the voting booth help the Republicans. Perhaps those women boycotted the election because they were not yet quite ready actually to pull the Reagan lever.

In 1976 NBC reported 20 percent of the voters in New York State to be Jews, but in 1980 NBC's Jewish percentage was 16 and ABC's lower still, 14. More New Yorkers voted for President than for Senator, as is normal, but in Long Island and Brooklyn more Jews voted for Senator than for President. Were the presidential abstainers mostly women, like the non-voters?

THE count in predominantly Jewish voting districts was in line with the networks' national estimates. In Brooklyn, Long Island, Philadelphia, and Los Angeles the Jewish vote was more Republican than usual, with poorer Jews voting Republican less than richer ones.

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Two exceptions stand out. Contrast three election districts in prosperous, somewhat radical-chic Great Neck, Long Island (the 10th, 12th, and 14th of the 16th Assembly District), with two election districts in middle-income, heavily Orthodox Borough Park, Brooklyn (the 27th and 28th of the 48th Assembly District).

	Carter	Reagan	Anderson
	Percent		
Great Neck (1877 voters)	55	32	13
Borough Park (775)	21	76(!)	3

Though the Moral Majority is strongly pro-Israel, most Jews seem to be scared of it. Borough Park is different. Borough Park, insofar as it turns its attention at all to the Moral Majority, must like what it sees. Many Jews are in the synagogue on Yom Kippur when Leviticus 18 is read, but it is the Jews of Borough Park who take Leviticus 18—I do not go so far as to say Leviticus 20—seriously.

Invoking a First Amendment that James Madison would not recognize, our courts forbid the Ten Commandments to be exposed to children in public school and then allow the children to be exposed in vile movies. For the Moral Majority that is secular humanism. For Borough Park it is *'avodah zarah*, paganism. Borough Park would have voted mostly for Reagan in any event. Still, 76 percent?

In foreign affairs, Borough Park has no great fondness for the Soviet Union. But that comes second. What comes first is worry about Israel.

Worry about Israel came first for many other Jews as they decided whom to vote for—or against. In New York the Democratic presidential primary was held soon after some particularly egregious shenanigans about Israel. Jews, three out of every eight voters in that primary, repaid Carter by going four to one against him. Kennedy won.

On election day many Jews interviewed by the networks must have used questions about foreign and military affairs to express their anxiety about American support for Israel. When Carter conceded defeat on television that evening, there, right behind him, stood Jesse Jackson, the PLO's friend. Whether Gentile or Jewish, much of the vote for Carter was not pro-Carter but anti-Reagan. For some Jews, seeing Jackson there must have tempered disappointment over the victory of the man they had voted against. It may even have brought to mind someone they had high-mindedly determined to ignore, Jimmy's brother Billy.

That Jews worried about Israel does not mean they wanted Israel to tell them how to vote, or listened if they were told. In 1972 a Labor government in Israel signaled that it preferred the Republican, and most American Jews did not vote for him. In 1980 a conservative government in Israel signaled, less clearly, that it preferred the Democrat, and most American Jews did not vote for him.

Moshe Dayan said that during the Yom Kippur War the Israeli army fired in the afternoon the shells offloaded from Flying Boxcars in the morning. If there had been no American shells, and no Flying Boxcars, Israel would have perished. To survive, Israel needs the American arsenal full.

From Franklin D. Roosevelt to Hubert H. Humphrey, if you were a liberal you were for American strength and resolve. Then Vietnam did Humphrey in, and everybody who was anybody said that if you were for strength and resolve you were a conservative. Jewish liberals in Congress would vote against a full arsenal and then complain that the United States was not giving Israel enough military aid. Their Jewish constituents let them get away with it.

In New York, in 1980, Representative Elizabeth Holtzman contested the Democratic nomination for Senator with the more centrist Bess Myerson (and two others). Adapting to the anxieties of 1980, Holtzman tried to rewrite her record on military budgets. She did not persuade even the New York *Times*, which endorsed her while admitting that "her votes against every major military appropriation cannot be defended as mere opposition to 'waste.' "

In the primary, Jews alone preferred Holtzman to Myerson, but so massively—two to one—that they nominated her. They thought her more serious and deserving. Since they worried about a threatened Israel that had become a pariah among the nations, why did they tell pollsters that in foreign and military matters there was no significant difference between Holtzman and Myerson? Myerson is said to have run a poor campaign, which failed to bring the difference home. No doubt. But the difference was there for all to see, campaign or no, provided they wished to see.

In the election, Jews—including many who voted for Reagan—voted for Holtzman almost three to one over Alfonse D'Amato and Senator Jacob Javits combined. You could tell which Long Island towns had a significant Jewish population by going down the returns in *Newsday* and noting where there was a very low D'Amato and high Holtzman vote. Even conservative Borough Park voted almost five to one against D'Amato. But Borough Park was different to the last. It gave its majority to Javits, who ran as a Liberal.

The Jewish vote against D'Amato was unrelated to the presidential vote. NBC's New York and nationwide Jewish percentages for Reagan were the

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same, 36. D'Amato and Reagan won by narrow pluralities, Reagan leading D'Amato by only 1 or 2 percent. With Jews, Reagan led D'Amato by 29 percent.

Neither was the Jewish vote anti-Italian. If the Republicans had nominated a President Giamatti of Yale, or a Joseph A. Califano, many more Jews would have voted for him. D'Amato did not appeal to a Good Government constituency—the League of Women Voters, for instance, or Jews. Like political scientists in the universities, writers in the *Times* can lament the weakened party system and discover unsuspected merit in political machines. But that is in the abstract. Concretely, how could the *Times* say anything good about a machine politician, especially a Republican, suburban one?

D'Amato ran as a conservative (and Conservative). Most of the Jews who voted for Reagan did not vote for him because he was a conservative but because they thought America, and Israel, would be better off if he were in charge of foreign and military affairs. Foreign and military affairs have less weight, and domestic affairs more, in voters' assessment of candidates for the Senate and House —that is, until anxiety about foreign and military affairs gives way to alarm. Then, FDR said, Dr. Win the War takes over from Dr. New Deal. In 1980 Jewish voters were still only anxious.

For years, Jewish Democrats in New York had voted for Javits, depending on Gentile Republicans to nominate him. In 1980 the Gentiles did not oblige. If more Jews had been registered as Republicans they might again have had an electable Javits to vote for. Anyway, the Republican party is no longer a kind of Bronxville or Darien. Three of the six Jewish Senators are Republicans.

IN SUM, what was old about 1980 is that Jews as a group are still unassimilated politically, still unlike Gentile neighbors and colleagues. They are still on the liberal side of the political terrain—which, however, has shifted to the Right. And they still worry about Israel.

What was new was very new: fewer than half voted for the Democrat. The most important cause of this change was the desire for a strong, resolute America and a secure Israel.

Newest, and most unexpected, was that Jewish men and women seem to be electorates so distinct that Disraeli would have called them two nations. This needs thinking about, beyond politics.

On reconsideration, it may after all not be too soon to declare the 1980 election a watershed for Jews. No matter what happens in 1982 and 1984, for the first time most will have experienced in their own flesh that the right hand need not wither if it strays from the Democratic lever.

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Central America and Its Enemies

Constantine Menges

THAT there has been a dramatic increase in Central American revolutionary violence in the past four years is obvious to everyone. What is not so obvious, however, is that this increase has been accompanied by the presence of four international forces supporting the groups engaged in such revolutionary violence: first, Cuba and other Communist countries along with the regional Communist parties; second, Palestinian terrorists and some radical Arab states; third, Mexico; fourth, virtually all social-democratic governments as well as the parties that make up the Socialist International.

I

BY NOW the role of the Cuban and Communist groups in Nicaragua and El Salvador is quite well known. As late as 1977, the State Department described the Sandinista movement (FSLN) in Nicaragua as a "small, pro-Castro, Marxist terrorist group" with little popular backing. In 1978, revolutionary violence began to gather momentum after the leader of the genuinely democratic opposition forces, Pedro Chamorro, was murdered by still unknown terrorists. By early 1979, with active Cuban encouragement, all the Marxist-Leninist groups were unified and then entered into a coalition with democratic and other non-Communist elements which were also opposed to the Somoza regime. In July 1979, this coalition of democratic political groups and Communist-led guerrillas overthrew Somoza.

Since July 1979, the Communist and radical Left groups have made a hidden but nevertheless intense effort to consolidate their power within the nine-person FSLN directorate. In contrast, the much more loosely organized democratic groups represented by various independent political parties, non-Communist business and labor associations, most of the Catholic Church, and most of the population have been steadily weakened by a strategy of ambiguous but unremitting harassment and persecution.

As a result, Nicaragua today is nearly under the control of the Communist groups. A new secret police has been built with Cuban and East German help, and a new army has been established with the help of thousands of Cuban advisers, and a neighborhood-informant network, called the Sandinista Defense Committees, has been established in imitation of the Cuban block committees. These three instruments of social control are in the hands of the FSLN directorate and are being strengthened with Cuban and other Communist help in order to provide a base for irreversible power. In spite of written promises to the Organization of American States before the July 1979 victory, political and civil rights are being repressed and free elections have been "postponed" until 1985.

In El Salvador, three groups are competing: a centrist civil-military coalition, the extreme Right, and an extreme Left coalition led by the unified command of five different Marxist-Leninist groups. Here too Cuban involvement has been clear at least since March 1980 when the Carter administration publicly told Congress that Cuban support for the terrorist groups in El Salvador and Guatemala included "advice, propaganda, safe haven, training, arms . . . along with men and material. . . ." In his last few days in office, Carter was finally provoked by a Communist-led "general offensive" into sending military aid to "support the Salvadoran government in its struggle against left-wing terrorism supported covertly with arms, ammunition, training, and political and military advice by Cuban and other Communist nations."

Shortly thereafter the new Reagan administration issued a white paper on the extensive Cuban-managed international Communist networks supporting the revolutionary process in El Salvador. It discussed the "covert delivery to El Salvador of nearly two hundred tons of arms brought mostly through Cuba and Nicaragua" and the "major effort . . . to provide cover" for this operation by supplying arms of Western manufacture and by supporting an "organization known as the Revolutionary Democratic Front to seek non-Communist political support."

II

UNLIKE Cuban involvement, the role of the PLO and other Palestinian and radical Arab terrorist groups in Central America

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has remained virtually unexplored. Thus when the Reagan administration recently told Congress that "radical Arab states, the PLO, and the terrorist Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine have furnished guns, arms, and training" to Marxist revolutionaries in Central America, it was opening a subject that had for too long been treated with silence. Yet it provides an excellent example of cooperation among anti-Western terrorist groups.

Shortly after the victory in Nicaragua, a Sandinista leader said: "There is a long-standing blood unity between us and the Palestinian revolution. We have long had close relations with the Palestinians. Many of the units belonging to the Sandinista movement were at Palestinian revolution bases in Jordan. . . . As an example of our cooperation with the Palestinian revolution, a number of our comrades took part in the operation to divert four planes which the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine seized and landed at an airfield in Jordan." Yasir Arafat, too, during a visit to Nicaragua in July 1980, boasted about the significant help the PLO had given the revolutionaries.

In El Salvador the extreme Left has provided evidence of its close relations with the Palestinian extremists by often condemning the "ultra-rightist alliance of Washington, Tel Aviv, Guatemala City, and Caracas." Tel Aviv is consistently first after Washington, and before Guatemala, in most of the condemnations issued by the various revolutionary groups in Central America.

As to the involvement of radical Arab states, former CIA director Stansfield Turner informed the American people on the television program *Sixty Minutes* that "Libya is providing extensive help for the revolutionaries in Central America" as part of the "internationalization of the revolution down there." This covert support became more visible in April 1981 when Libya provided $100 million to help Nicaragua cope with the loss of $15 million in U.S. aid.

It is obvious that the tie that binds the terrorists of Central American and the Middle East is their common enemy, the United States. For the PLO and other Palestinian and radical Arab groups, giving help to the revolutionaries of Central America is a strategic investment. Whether successful or not, this violence distracts the United States and saps its energies. But neither the Cubans nor the Palestinian extremists could have imagined that the Central American revolutions would have brought about such a deep division between the United States on the one side and Mexico and the social democrats on the other.

III

One observer has described the Nicaraguan revolution as the fruit of a new "Havana-Mexico-Social-Democratic Axis." I have already sketched Havana's work in Nicaragua on behalf of Marxist-Leninist groups. As for Mexico and the social democrats, in April 1979, the Marxist FSLN and the "group of twelve," which represented the genuinely democratic opposition to Somoza, met in Mexico City with leaders of Mexico and the Socialist International. The Sandinistas were blunt in telling their hosts that "moral aid is not enough . . . we need material help to guarantee the victory." On May 4, 1979, there was a worldwide gathering of Socialist International leaders in San José, Costa Rica, specifically to review the situation in Nicaragua. There it was decided to undertake a "total offensive against Somoza." The representative of the social democrats of the Dominican Republic declared: "If the Nicaraguans want words, we'll give that to them, if they want money, we'll give them money, if they need arms, we will give them arms, if they need men and volunteers, we'll search for them until there are enough to overthrow Somoza."

After the revolutionary victory in July 1979, the obvious next question was whether the Cuban-supported Marxist-Leninist groups or the genuinely democratic forces would prevail in Nicaragua. Every student of Communist revolution and, indeed, of this century's history, knows that the united front is a standard technique for achieving revolutionary success. In 1920, Lenin drew on his successful experience with the social democrats against the Russian Czar to write: "The Communist movement should always make use of the united front and support its social-democratic allies as the rope supports the hanged man."

This pattern of building a coalition with the social democrats was also used by Fidel Castro. In 1957 and 1958, Castro described himself frequently as a "Jeffersonian democrat" and a person who intended to bring democracy to Cuba. After his victory, Castro admitted candidly that he had shaped his initial program "with care," to prevent his movement from being "very small and limited." After he had crushed the social democrats and moved beyond the transitional state of apparent power-sharing, Castro said: "If it had been a more radical program . . . the revolutionary movement against Batista would not, of course, have gained the breadth it obtained and made possible the victory."

Many Latin American social democrats also shared in the "Cuban mistake": endorsing Castro without establishing a separate power base. The failure of their hopes for democratic change there should have demonstrated the dangers of acting in coalition with the violent Left. And many European social democrats, like Willy Brandt, would have cause to remember the Communist success in dominating much of the Republican coalition in the Spanish Civil War against Franco and more recently the Portuguese experience. There, following the 1974 revolution which ended the five-decades long Salazar/Caetano regime, the Communist party with strong covert Soviet support moved

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quickly to dominate most government organizations, trade unions, and communications, and seemed to be heading inexorably toward dictatorial power. Only the failure of a Communist coup attempt in 1975 and a concerted effort by democratic parties and governments in Europe to help both the Christian Democrats and the social democrats and oppose the Communists resulted in the free elections of 1976 and the functioning democracy that Portugal has today.

These revolutionary experiences—perhaps exotic to the average American political leader—are an important and living element of the tradition of the European and Latin American social-democratic parties. Paying heed to it would have meant, in Nicaragua, an effort on the part of Mexico and the social-democratic parties to strengthen the genuinely democratic groups and to prevent the covert Cuban strengthening of the Marxist-Leninist groups.

This did not happen. Instead, a number of European countries with social-democratic parties in power (together with the United States under Carter) contributed more than $600 million in financial aid to Nicaragua in the first year after the revolution but made no serious effort to encourage democratic institutions. In addition, a consortium of international banks renegotiated the debt of Nicaragua on generous terms so that an additional $500 million of resources were made available. Much of this aid came as a result of the support of the Socialist International through its member parties within the countries of Europe and Latin America.

In August 1979, the Socialist International said it would do everything it could to provide help for the "people of Nicaragua" and it sent a delegation of leaders headed by Mario Soares of Portugal to visit Managua. Soares, at that time, said that "aid should be unconditionally given. The Chilean revolution failed because no one gave it a hand." In September 1979, the social-democratic president of Costa Rica said specifically that the Socialist International "has clearly established its collaboration and support for the junta of national reconstruction and the directorate of the FSLN."

This was a disturbing statement because the FSLN, as a Marxist-Leninist party, was not the social-democratic party of Nicaragua. In fact, by then, the genuinely democratic parties, including the Nicaraguan social democrats, were already beginning to become very apprehensive about the close links with Cuba the Sandinista directorate was establishing in the building of a new army and a new secret police, and about the mounting evidence that the promises of free elections and respect for political and civil rights were not going to be kept. The Nicaraguan democratic parties appealed to Mexico, Venezuela, and the Socialist International to take these matters up with the Sandinista directorate. Instead, President López Portillo of Mexico visited Nicaragua in November 1979 and expressed his fraternal solidarity with the new govenment while making clear that Mexican aid would be totally "unconditioned." López Portillo justified his passive posture concerning democratic elections in the name of Mexico's historic principle of "nonintervention." Nor did the Socialist International provide any help to the genuinely democratic groups.

By the spring and summer of 1980, the Sandinistas had announced their plans to build an army three times the size of the army under Somoza. An estimated 4-5,000 Cubans were in Nicaragua, and the Cubans and East Germans continued strengthening the new secret police as well as the neighborhood-informant committees. In the summer of 1980, the four democratic parties of Nicaragua made a plaintive and urgent public appeal for free elections and civil liberties. In the fall and winter of 1980, first the Carter and then the Reagan administration provided Mexican and social-democratic leaders with evidence of Nicaraguan support for revolutionary violence in El Salvador and Guatemala. None of these facts or appeals led to any change in the policies of Mexico and the social democrats, policies which drew no distinction between the totalitarian and democratic Left.

IV

During 1980, while Cuba worked to help its friends in Nicaragua consolidate power, and while Mexico and the social democrats continued to ignore these harsh realities, the focus of revolutionary violence in Central America shifted to El Salvador.

Following a December 1979 meeting in Havana, the five Marxist-Leninist terrorist groups and the Communist party of El Salvador agreed to form a united command, publicly announced in January 1980. This extreme Left coalition has followed a consistent political-military strategy which has included relentless terrorist, military, and propaganda attacks on the current government to fragment and isolate it internally and internationally, along with a steady build-up in the organizational and military strength of the unified command. Growing from an estimated 400 terrorists in 1979 to about 1,000 in 1979, the Communist-led coalition, now called the FMLN, fielded a well-armed force of 5-6,000 in the January 1981 "general offensive."

While Cuba and the regional Communist networks played their well-established role of training and indoctrinating guerrilla fighters and establishing arms-supply and infiltration routes, Mexico and the social democrats made their own important contributions to the revolutionary cause. In January 1980 a West German social-democratic political-action foundation held a conference in Costa Rica for the purpose of declaring its solidarity with and legitimizing the new revolutionary

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coalition of El Salvador. Mexico joined in, providing financial support and facilities which permitted its territory to become, in the words of the New York *Times*, the "guerrillas' propaganda base."

Although the government of El Salvador had implemented a major land-reform program and had nationalized all banks and agricultural export companies, this had little effect on the March 1980 meeting of the Socialist International. The member parties, including the democratic-socialist parties of Germany, France, the United Kingdom, and other major U.S. allies, denounced the new land reforms as a "false program of reform and repression" and warned against a "North American military intervention." A senior State Department official had given Willy Brandt, president of the Socialist International, a complete briefing on the extensive evidence which showed that the Salvadoran revolutionary front was Communist and tightly linked to Cuba, but Brandt made no effort to achieve any balance in the discussion. In fact, the Socialist International invited Fidel Castro to speak as an honored guest, passed a resolution calling for Puerto Rican independence as the "only solution," and urged alliance with the guerrilla forces in Latin America. Then at its June 1980 conference the Socialist International passed a resolution declaring that it "fully supports the struggle of the Revolutionary Democratic Front [FDR] . . . in El Salvador," as the new united-front organization was called.

The Mexican foreign minister now began to speak publicly about the need for a "Nicaraguan-style solution" in El Salvador, and the supportive activities of the Mexican governing party, the PRI, grew steadily. The next month, during a visit to Germany, López Portillo met with Willy Brandt and the two agreed to ignore U.S. concerns and continue their activities on behalf of the revolutionary Left in Central America. In the meantime, the campaign of political terror was proudly being described by the "liberation front" in frequent bulletins such as this report of May 25, 1980:

> The political-military offensive of the liberation forces . . . has been effectively implemented through constant sabotage actions and bold devastating attacks. . . . This offensive was necessary to announce the threat of war to the repressive corps of this small nation . . . which . . . has been invaded by the regular Honduran and Guatemalan armies [and] thousands of soldiers and all kinds of planes, helicopters, tanks, and armored vehicles from the United States and Israel.

The report goes on to list the killing of 914 soldiers, members of the national guard, police, and "informers," which accounted for about half of the estimated 2,000 deaths up to that time. The anti-Israel element reflects the persistent theme of linkage among the "imperialist" enemies.

In June 1980 the leader of the Salvadoran Communist party went on a journey to the Eastern bloc where he obtained specific commitments from Moscow that it would encourage its partners like Vietnam and Ethiopia to donate hundreds of tons of (mainly American) weapons for use in the "general offensive." Shortly thereafter, while on a trip to Havana, the Mexican president expressed his "continued solidarity with the Cuban revolution," and Gustavo Carvajal Moreno, the leader of Mexico's ruling party, the PRI, agreed upon specific measures in support of the guerrillas in both El Salvador and Guatemala. This included commitments of financial and propaganda support as well as rumored help in the shipment of weapons through Mexican territory. In addition, the PRI promised to host a conference of "world solidarity" with the Salvadoran revolution in late November.

V

By January 1981 a new situation existed in El Salvador. The extreme Left had failed three times to obtain popular support for its attempted general strikes in 1980 (May, August, and December); the Salvadoran population had not rallied during the military offensive in January 1981, and the government forces had repulsed the attacks after a week of bloody fighting. Moreover, there was a new Reagan administration in Washington which seemed clear about its determination to prevent a Communist victory in El Salvador. Did this new situation lead to any change in the actions of the Mexican or social-democratic leaders?

The evidence to date is that both of these "friendly" participants in the contemporary politics of Central America have continued their support of the revolutionary Left. After the military offensive failed, the Socialist International issued a call for a worldwide economic embargo against El Salvador. Austrian Chancellor Bruno Kreisky warned that "revolutionary movements in Latin America have gained sympathy in Europe" and that American backing for "dictatorships" like that in El Salvador "could provoke anti-American feelings in Europe worse than during the Vietnam war." In recent months the Socialist International has reaffirmed its endorsement of the Revolutionary Democratic Front.

Mexico, if anything, became even more emphatic in its support of the Salvadoran revolutionaries. The president of the ruling party was sent to Nicaragua, where he said that country was "not alone" against the United States and pledged continued support for the revolutionary Left in El Salvador that "fights for its freedom." In February 1981, the "Permanent People's Tribunal" met in Mexico and concluded that the Salvadoran government was guilty of "carrying out genocidal policies . . . reminiscent of testimony offered at the

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International Tribunal in Nuremburg after World War II and . . . the U.S. was guilty of complicity in the perpetration of the crimes."

Next, just as the Reagan administration was threatening to act against Cuba unless it ceased providing weapons, funds, and training for Central American guerrillas, Mexico announced its first energy agreement with Castro.

VI

WHY have Mexico and the social-democratic parties decided to join with Cuba in supporting Central American revolutions? The explanation can be found in the influence of a strong, radical-leftist faction within the PRI and most social-democratic parties; in a theory of politics in developing countries which emphasizes anti-imperialism and nationalism while ignoring democracy and rejecting any notion of possible danger from forming coalitions with Communist groups; in a hidden *Realpolitik* which assumes that timely help for leftist revolutionaries will be repaid in domestic social peace and future international influence; and in a partisan interest in weakening such domestic rivals as Christian Democrats.

During the last decade these factors in different combinations and strengths in Mexico and among many social-democratic parties and governments in Europe have produced what Carl Gershman* has accurately described as an alignment with "anti-Western revolutionary movements in the Third World" which include, besides the totalitarian Left in Central America, the PLO and other Palestinian terrorist groups and Marxist regimes and movements like SWAPO in southern Africa.

Due to its historic leadership, its wealth, and the role of Willy Brandt, the German Social Democratic party currently is the most influential member of the Socialist International, and can best serve to illustrate how the current situation came about.

While the majority of German social democrats are moderates, they have permitted their international presence to be managed to a large degree by far Left groups. Yet the success of this growing minority faction also owes much to the fact that the socialist parties have for now abandoned both their commitment to democracy in the developing countries and their previous realism about Communism.

Today's Socialist International, founded in 1951, issued a clear statement of principles which included the view that there can be no socialism without liberty and that Communism had deformed socialism and created a new imperialism. The 1962 Oslo Declaration repeated these views in eloquent terms, stating that "liberty and democratic self-government must not be surrendered." Yet in 1974, the Socialist International, thanks largely to German initiatives, modified its statutes to permit non-democratic parties from developing areas to participate as "observers," and further changes toward cooperation with "socialist-oriented" but not necessarily democratic parties were welcomed by the Geneva revisions in 1976. This permitted groups such as the FSLN of Nicaragua and the New Jewel Movement of Grenada to participate. A next step was taken in 1978 at the Vancouver Congress where the Socialist International invited representatives from "socialist-oriented" dictatorships (such as Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau) and approved joint political action with forces of the Left including Marxist-Leninist parties.

Brandt himself explained this new viewpoint: in the Third World one should not expect political rights which have "too much of a European or North American stamp" because "he whose life is exposed to sheer misery can take only a minor interest in civil rights" other than "social human rights." This in effect implied a triple standard, one for the democratic nations, another for dictatorial governments or movements using leftist rhetoric, and a third for rightist dictatorships irrespective of their economic success. In May 1979, the social-democratic leaders of Latin America, Spain, Portugal, and Germany met in Costa Rica to plan their material support for the Nicaraguan revolution and declared that "they had to establish strategies to break with the anti-Communist ideologies . . . approved by the Latin American military and the government of the United States."

It should be noted that constant and increasing criticism of the U.S. along these lines by the social-democratic parties occurred while the Carter human-rights policy in Central America was in full flower. Although the United States joined in contributing to the $625 million in economic aid provided to Nicaragua by the democracies, and though President Carter publicly stated until his last three days in office that there were no serious signs of a Marxist dictatorship being established in revolutionary Nicaragua, the social democrats seemed to take little notice. Indeed, a Portuguese socialist declared: "For Europe, Carter sells a policy of human rights and for Central America a policy of repression."

Beyond muddled and radical ideology, beyond the fashionable and condescending view that democracy cannot be expected in the Third World, is the deep anxiety of many European leaders about their countries' dependence on raw materials from the Third World. They believe that a policy of fraternal cooperation with ruling or soon-to-be-dominant parties in countries which supply those needed resources might produce positive economic effects. (Mexico, for its part, hopes to buy itself immunity from external revolution-

* "The Socialists and the PLO," COMMENTARY, October 1979.

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ary pressures.*) Combine these perceptions of national interest with the twin myths that democracy is impossible and revolution is inevitable in regions like Central America and the justification for the recent policies becomes strong even for many moderate social democrats.

Last, there is the partisan dimension. No group likes to admit grave errors in judgment. When the "united front" with Communism fails once again and the slide toward totalitarianism becomes clear, what do social democrats do? As Jean-François Revel points out: "If they remain silent things just get worse, but if they were to rebel they would have to confess publicly that they were wrong about the Communists. . . ." This is not only difficult emotionally and institutionally, it is not good politics, and for that reason social democrats will usually find other explanations for why things went badly. But for the German and most other socialist parties, there is an even more direct partisan reason for refusing to become realistic about Central America: their domestic political rivals, the Christian Democrats, are on the other side.

In marked contrast to the social-democratic parties, the Christian Democrats of Europe and Latin America have shown a consistent commitment to democratic social reform in Central America and a sober realism about the threats posed by both the extreme Left and the extreme Right.

Venezuela in particular, under President Luis Herrera Campíns, a Christian Democrat, has been a positive democratic example and influence. Upon becoming president, he continued the support for the Nicaraguan revolutionary coalition begun by his social-democratic predecessor by providing $100 million in economic aid to the new government. At the same time, however, in early 1980, the Venezuelan government began to speak publicly about the need to safeguard the democratic opportunities in Nicaragua by permitting political and civil liberties.

So far as El Salvador is concerned, the Venezuelan government and Christian Democratic party have contended that "the current civil-military junta represents the political center, and is therefore the only hope for a moderate solution to the ongoing civil war." Since José Napoleon Duarte, the Salvadoran Christian Democratic president, had been deprived of his election victory by the extreme Right in 1972 and then lived in Venezuelan exile until 1979, he has many close friends among the Venezuelan Christian Democrats. They understand the enormous difficulty of reformers who must struggle against both extremes simultaneously. Though it is now forgotten, in 1960 the new democratic government of Venezuela found itself under simultaneous assault by the extreme Right, including Trujillo, the Dominican dictator, and the extreme Left supported by Fidel Castro. Venezuelan Christian Democrats recall that they joined with their social-democratic colleagues in welcoming the victory of Castro but soon the thousands of innocent firing-squad victims and political prisoners helped them see their mistake.

Other Latin American Christian Democratic parties, many of which are in opposition to authoritarian regimes, have frequently expressed support for the Duarte party and endorsed the Salvadoran social reforms. In Germany, too, the Christian Democrats have tried to broaden the discussion in the European media by presenting the facts about El Salvador; they have also tried to persuade the Schmidt government to restore aid to the Duarte regime, especially in view of the fact that Nicaragua has received large German contributions. Dr. Hennig Wegener, a CDU member of the German parliament, has known Duarte and El Salvador for some years, and after a visit in January 1981, wrote:

> El Salvador cannot be conquered militarily any longer. There will probably be a second "final offensive." . . . The people are not with the guerrillas. They have had enough of force and terror. They want peace and social reform. Will this occur? The agrarian reform is a hopeful beginning. . . .
>
> [However] the political isolation of El Salvador that has been achieved might be decisive. It is not just a product of Communist deception. The Socialist International has played a major role. Whoever believes that the [social-democratic] titular head of the FDR . . . will play a real role after a guerrilla victory will be brutally surprised. . . . It is incomprehensible that the German Federal Republic has supported a United Nations resolution on El Salvador that was drafted by Cuba, Angola, and Nicaragua, that is practically by the Soviet Union . . . and that holds the officials of the Salvadoran government alone responsible for all the suffering there.

There is no question that the international solidarity among the Christian Democrats has been of immense political, material, and moral help to their associates in Central America. The tragedy of the social-democratic policy is not only that it strengthens the Communists but also that it removes social democrats from active cooperation with Christian Democrats in building democratic institutions, as occurred in Portugal and Spain.

VII

What must the U.S. do to improve the prospects for democratic reform and prevent Communist success in Central America?

A first step—which the Reagan administration has already taken in El Salvador—is to recognize the danger and provide a balanced program of bi-

* For a detailed analysis of the case of Mexico, see Carlos Rangel's article, "Mexico and Other Dominoes," in the June issue of COMMENTARY.

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lateral help to the threatened countries. Second, there is a need to work with transnational groups such as parties, trade unions, civic, business, and religious organizations to strengthen those genuinely democratic and moderate forces which exist within each country. Third, together with friendly governments, there must be competent action to neutralize the terrorist networks established by the violent Left in the region with help from Cuba, other Communist countries, and the radical Palestinians.

As it happens, there may now be a greater disposition in the region to support such an approach, not only because of the actions of the Reagan administration but also because Castro launched a terrorist offensive last February and March that backfired. Within a few weeks, Cuban-armed Colombian guerrillas were shipped via Panama into Colombia (and caught); attacks and death threats were directed against U.S. personnel in Panama and Costa Rica; Honduras suffered an embassy attack, the bombing of its parliament, and an airplane hijacking; and there was an unauthorized Cuban raid on the embassy of Ecuador in Havana. (Last year, moreover, Castro ordered the assassination of the president of Costa Rica because he had given sanctuary to many of the Cubans who fled in the spring of 1980.)

Rather than intimidating the target governments, these "responses" by Castro to Reagan have brought about the suspension of diplomatic relations with Cuba by Colombia and Ecuador; an apparent end to the cozy working relationship Panama believed it had established with Cuba; and a crackdown by Costa Rica on various exile groups that had been part of the Cuban-managed propaganda and arms-smuggling networks.

BUT can Mexico and the social democrats be persuaded to withdraw their support for the revolutionary Left in El Salvador? Can they be persuaded to oppose both extremes and work with the existing democratic reform groups, including the Christian Democrats? Can they be made to see that success for the extreme Left in El Salvador would soon be followed in Guatemala by increased repression and guerrilla terrorism leading to Communist victory there too, and the high probability of revolutionary violence and counterterror in Mexico, with devastating damage to the prospects of democratic development in the entire region?

Yet El Salvador can also be a positive turning point. The centrist coalition is implementing reforms and holding firm against both extremes. It is becoming known that the totalitarian Left has systematically deceived the social democrats of Europe and a variety of groups in the United States. If the guerrillas had won last January, their lies might never have been exposed, but there is still a chance to confront the social democrats with their misconceptions about El Salvador and Nicaragua. Success in El Salvador is possible. This tragic conflict represents a major opportunity for Mexico to reclaim its realism, and for at least some of the member parties of the Socialist International to reclaim their lost commitment to genuine democracy.

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The Politics of Muslim Anti-Semitism

Daniel Pipes

> The representative of the Zionist entity is evidently incapable of concealing his deep-seated hatred toward the Arab world for having broken loose from the notorious exploitation of its natural resources, long held in bondage and plundered by his own people's cabal which controls and manipulates and exploits the rest of humanity by controlling the money and wealth of the world. . . . People like Lord Rothschild every day, in ironclad secrecy, decide to flash around the world how high the price of gold should be on each particular day. And there is Mr. Oppenheimer of South Africa, who holds 15 million blacks in bondage in order to exploit and monopolize the diamonds, the uranium, and other precious resources which rightfully belong to the struggling African people of South Africa and Namibia. It is a well-known fact that the Zionists are the richest people in the world and control much of its destiny.

DISREGARD the references to "the Zionist entity" and "the struggling African people of South Africa and Namibia" and these words might have been heard at a Nazi rally in the 30's. Yet they were spoken only last December, and not by a member of the radical Right but by Hazem Nuseibeh, Jordan's delegate to the United Nations. These remarks, moreover, though unusually flagrant and provocative, are far from unique: similar talk about a worldwide Jewish conspiracy is heard regularly from the leaders of many Muslim countries in the Middle East. They assault *Jews*, no longer even pretending to draw a distinction between them and Israelis.

This is puzzling, for until recently Muslims had nothing in their lexicon corresponding to Christian anti-Semitism. Jews had lived among Muslims since the days of Muhammad without ever becoming the target of such base, far-fetched attacks as the Jordanian ambassador's. Yet if notions of Jewish conspiracy are alien to Islam, they are now most often heard coming from Muslims. How has this come about? What significance does it have?

Before taking up these questions, a distinction must be made between ordinary anti-Semitism—disliking Jews and imputing to them various objectionable traits—and morbid fear of Jews. Dislike of Jews fits into normal patterns of racial, ethnic, and religious bias, and though neither pleasant nor harmless, it does not differ substantially from prejudice against other minorities. The second category of anti-Semitism is quite different. It goes far beyond normal ethnic or religious animosities to claim that the Jews actually threaten the world. Before the 18th century, this threat was conceived in theological terms: Jews were seen as the enemies of Christianity. Since then, the emphasis has become secularized, so that modern anti-Semitism has as its central motif the notion that Jews are to be feared because they aspire, through economic and political conspiracy, to world domination.* That Muslims were not conversant with this second level of anti-Semitism until recently is not surprising, for it is a characteristically Christian notion that derives from ancient relations with Jews, going back all the way to the very birth of Christianity.

Christians have convoluted feelings about Jews, deriving at least in part from the ambiguous tie between them: Jesus was one of them but rejected many of their practices; Christians accept the Hebrew scriptures but read them in a different light; Jews did not accept Jesus as the messiah, and have been blamed for his crucifixion; some Christians believe that Jesus' Second Coming will not occur until all Jews convert. For these and other reasons, Jews cannot but occupy a central place in Christian consciousness; they can never be forgotten. Even unbelieving Christians retain an awareness of the special role of Jews in their civilization. By the same token, Christian peoples cannot be indifferent to the state of Israel. Whether they favor it

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* In theory, anti-Semitism is directed against all peoples who speak Semitic languages, not just Jews, but also Arabs, Ethiopians, and others. In fact, it refers to Jews alone—as the collaboration between Nazis and Arab leaders during World War II proved. Arabs occasionally protest that as Semites themselves, they are incapable of anti-Semitism, but this is merely semantic mischief; whatever its etymological source, the term clearly refers to anti-Jewish sentiment and Arabs are as capable of this as anyone speaking an Indo-European language.

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or not, Israel can no more be just another state for Christians than it can be for Jews. The connections go too deep for mere indifference.

If Jews in the West suffered from too much Christian attention, in Muslim countries they had the good fortune to be both less significant and less prominent. In Europe Jews were after all the only "infidels" most Christians ever encountered and they stood out very conspicuously in what was otherwise a fairly homogeneous religious environment. In the Muslim world, by contrast, Jews were one minority among others; though important in Islam's early development, they did not play any great role in subsequent Muslim life. As a result, they never intruded all that much on Muslim consciousness.

In general, Muslims take a somewhat patronizing view of other religions. In their eyes, Islam is the one true and eternal religion and while other faiths contain a part, if not the whole, of God's message, they inevitably distort it. Thus, Jews are wrong in believing that God's religion is for them only, and Christians are wrong in worshipping one of God's messengers as though he were God Himself. (The Qur'an accepts Jesus as prophet and messiah but rejects him as the son of God.)

A Muslim believes so confidently in the perfection of Islam that he cannot quite comprehend why Jews and Christians continue to follow their outmoded and imperfect versions of the truth. This confidence can be seen in the Muslim response to discrepancies between biblical and Qur'anic narratives. Though the Qur'an came long after the Bible, Muslims do not hesitate to claim that their version of some events central to Judaism and Christianity is the correct one. Thus, Abraham lived in Mecca according to the Qur'an, and Jesus was never crucified. The Qur'an also implies that the Christian Trinity consists of the Father, the Son, and Mary, rather than the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Christians cannot convince Muslims that this is a faulty, or at best a schismatic, notion, for the Qur'an is seen by Muslims to be faultless.

Oddly enough, this very confidence has allowed Islam to tolerate minorities better than Christianity, as may be seen in the religious diversity of the Middle East compared with Europe. So long as they met certain criteria (notably the possession of sacred scriptures) and so long as they did not challenge the superior status of Islam, non-Muslims were allowed to live under Muslim rule with the legal status of *dhimmis* (protected persons). They paid higher taxes and enjoyed fewer privileges, in return for which they had the right to practice their own religions. Such sanctioned toleration has no Christian counterpart; under Islam, Jews were second-class citizens but they were part of the legal landscape, not the problematic anomaly they were in the Christian world.

Historically, Jews and Christians under Muslim rule received about equal treatment. Muhammad himself had mixed relations with Jews, so they are condemned several times in the Qur'an; yet Jews hardly ever threatened Muslim political supremacy, while Christians launched major attacks on Muslims beginning with the Crusades and culminating in modern European imperialism. Partly for this reason, Jews generally survived Muslim rule better than Christians did. Indeed, in some areas, such as Yemen and North Africa, Christianity died out and only Judaism persisted.

Jews appeared strange in Christian Europe: their peculiar dietary habits, unusual clothing, and a preference for living apart made them different and odd. But Muslims had comparable food habits, distinctions of dress, and living arrangements, so Jewish practices appeared quite normal to them. Culturally, too, Jews participated in the mainstream of Muslim life, as they had never done in pre-modern Christian Europe. As one minority among several—unthreatening, and living in relatively familiar ways—Jews attracted little Muslim interest. On the whole, Jewish life flourished under Muslim rule when times were good for Muslims and declined when times were bad. While the *dhimmi* status implied institutionalized discrimination, it also meant that Jews rarely encountered systematic persecution. In pre-modern times, they lived markedly better under Islam than under Christianity.

MUSLIM attitudes toward Jews began to change in the 19th century. Napoleon's conquest of Egypt in 1798 brought Muslims of the Middle East into direct and intense contact with modern Europe. After many centuries of scorning the "Franks," Muslims watched in awe and despair as West European Christians far surpassed them in wealth and power. Christians had more advanced technology, more developed institutions, a more dynamic culture, and modern medicine. In the course of the 19th century, they overpowered most Muslim rulers, so that by World War I, few Islamic countries still enjoyed independence.

Like other non-Western peoples, Muslims responded by learning Western ways. They admired and sought to imitate not just Western military and economic techniques, but also many aspects of European political culture, including its social ideas and cultural fads. Along with much else, they also learned about anti-Semitism. Not surprisingly, it was the Arabic-speaking Christians of the Levant who were most receptive to theories of Jewish perfidy and played a key role in transmitting them, assisted by Europeans living in the Middle East. In 1840, for example, when an Italian priest and his native servant disappeared from Damascus, indigenous Catholics supported by the French consul invoked the ancient charge of "blood libel" against local Jewish inhabitants.

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But Europe not only made anti-Semitism available to Muslims, it also made them feel weak and hence vulnerable to anti-Semitic ideas. Muslims had long been accustomed to seeing themselves as successful in worldly matters. The stirring history of Muhammad's rise from orphan to ruler of Arabia; the phenomenal Arabian conquests which reached to France and China in less than a century; the great medieval empires, with their booming trade and distinguished culture—all of these created a Muslim expectation of wealth and power. What then had gone wrong? How had the despised Franks surpassed the Muslims? Even after many decades of debate, this question has not been satisfactorily answered.

Conspiracy theories have served to soften the blow, at least psychologically. The notion of a "hidden hand" manipulating events has unique importance in modern Middle Eastern politics, for many Muslims apparently need to believe that evil agents have stolen their rightful success. Often, it is the United States which is called upon to fill this role. When the Arabs could not accept the catastrophic defeat Israel inflicted on them in June 1967, they blamed covert American assistance. More recently, the Iranians have raised conspiratorial paranoia to new heights, and both parties in the Iraq-Iran war have been accusing the U.S. of helping the other. Zionist conspiracy theories are, as we shall see, even more widespread.

If Muslim grievances against Jews had been negligible in the pre-modern period, they increased substantially in the colonial era. Jews received favored treatment from European colonizers, especially the French, who needed local assistance in running their empires but feared and mistrusted Islam. Accordingly, they turned to non-Muslims and offered them all sorts of economic and social advantages. Jews were quick to seize these opportunities and rapidly gained privileges over their Muslim neighbors; no longer tied to *dhimmi* status, they became ambitious in precisely those ways which most offended Muslim sensibilities and provoked their resentment. When European rule ended, local Jews faced the accumulated wrath of decades, and often had no recourse but to flee. The French retreat from Algeria in 1962, for example, also signaled a Jewish exodus from that country.

DESPITE these local aggravations, the Muslim world had little political concern with Jews until the period immediately preceding Jewish statehood. The establishment of Israel in 1948 was a shocking, even a traumatic event, for it meant that at one stroke Jews had cast off their *dhimmi* status, conquered part of the Muslim patrimony, and become rulers over Muslims. Christian power was bad enough, but to have Jews—the subject people *par excellence*—pushing Muslims around was too much. Muslims had to account both for their own devastating failure and for the Jews' unexpected power.

Familiar with Christian European culture, receptive to conspiratorial theories, antagonized by Jewish economic success, outraged by the creation of Israel, Arab Muslims turned to anti-Semitism. In the 1950's, under the auspices of the Nasser regime in Egypt, a number of anti-Semitic works were translated into Arabic, and subsequently published and broadcast throughout the Arab world. Within a few years, most of the dominant anti-Semitic themes standard in the European repertoire were widely available in Arabic, with variations to suit local contingencies and all sorts of embellishments added in the translation.*

To a large degree anti-Semitism *followed* political hostilities with Israel—it did not cause them. This is an important distinction: while it was anti-Zionism (that is to say, a horror of Jewish sovereignty over lands once belonging to Muslims) which impelled the Arab states to fight Israel originally, anti-Zionism alone cannot account for the extraordinary role played by Israel in Arab political life since then. Credit for that must go to anti-Semitism. The Arab obsession with Israel during the past thirty years depends for its sustenance on the fund of anti-Semitic ideas imported from Christian Europe. Without this ideology, the Arabs could not have sustained their opposition at such fever pitch. (By contrast, it is interesting to note that even at the height of the Algerian war, Arabs did not vilify the French people as they do the Jews, though that was a far more protracted and brutal conflict against a much more powerful enemy.) While hostility to Israel has indigenous roots, its transformation into the single overriding Arab cause has depended on the availability of an anti-Semitic ideology. Having no such ideology of their own, the Muslims borrowed the one invented by Christians.

By now, most of the main features of Christian anti-Semitism have been thoroughly absorbed into the Arab Muslim world. Jews are no longer just another minority in the Middle East—they are suddenly as conspicuous as they were for centuries in Europe. Rumors of blood libel and cabals have gained wide exposure, unpleasant caricatures of Jews fill the Arab press and school textbooks, loose talk about Jewish economic exploitation goes unchallenged, and Jews still living in countries such as Syria and Iraq suffer government-sponsored persecution. Hardly a mishap occurs in the Arab world which does not get blamed on the Jews.

* The Nazis also did much to familiarize Muslims with anti-Semitism. Exploiting Middle Eastern resentment against the Allied government in the 1930's and 1940's, they established close bonds with leading political elements in Egypt, Palestine, Iraq, Iran, and elsewhere. Nazi sponsorship of anti-Semitism made it a live ideology in the Arab world; ex-Nazis then held important positions in Nasser's government during the 1950's.

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Most important, the Arabs have taken over the notion of a Jewish world conspiracy, first popularized in the notorious forgery, *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, and have given it a new lease on life.

The world-conspiracy idea has several obvious advantages in the Arab struggle. It makes Israel's very existence sinister; it cushions the reality of repeated defeats at Israel's hands; it makes Israel appear more dangerous, thus stimulating destructive passions in the Arab populace that might otherwise subside. Finally, by linking the Zionist conspiracy with European imperialism, the Arabs have won wide sympathy for their cause in the former colonies of the Third World.*

During the 1950's and 1960's, the outside world heard little about Arab anti-Semitism. Zionist conspiracy was common coin in Arab political rhetoric but it served mainly internal purposes and little attempt was made to convince others of its validity. There were exceptions, of course, as when Arab diplomats, at the time of Vatican II, did their best to pressure the Church not to exculpate the Jews for Jesus' death. But for the most part, non-Arabs were hardly aware of the growing importance of anti-Semitic ideas in the Middle East.

ALL this changed in the 1970's. Arabs no longer confined their anti-Semitism to internal discussions but made vigorous efforts to spread it internationally, giving it back, so to speak, to its Christian homeland. Two developments lie behind this change: the emergence of new leaders in the Middle East, and the great oil boom.

A number of virulently anti-Semitic leaders came to power in Saudi Arabia, Libya, and Iran in this period. Saudi rulers had long connected Zionism with Communism, but the 1967 war intensified their anti-Semitism, and the ruling group that took over after King Faisal's death in 1974 stressed it even more than he had. The Saudis were openly promoting anti-Semitism before any other state; visiting foreign dignitaries were often presented with copies of the *Protocols*, and still are. (While living in Tunis in 1970, I picked up a French translation published in Lebanon, and distributed gratis by the Saudi consulate.)

In Libya, the situation changed even more dramatically. Colonel Muammar al-Qaddafi, who took power in 1969, grew up idolizing Gamal Abdul Nasser and formed his political beliefs on the basis of broadcasts from Radio Cairo's "Voice of the Arabs" which in those years was riddled with anti-Semitism. Throughout the dozen years of his rule, Qaddafi has made the destruction of Israel his highest priority. In Iran, Ayatollah Khomeini, too, made vitriolic anti-Semitism a key issue in his attack on the Shah. Khomeini seems to have picked up anti-Semitic notions rather late in life, perhaps during his residence in Ba'th Iraq between 1964 and 1978.

The views of these Muslim leaders would count for little if not for the extraordinary oil boom that began about 1970. Producer revenues doubled by 1973, quadrupled in 1973-74, then doubled again in 1978-79. OPEC nations suddenly acquired astonishing wealth and power. The Saudi leaders and Qaddafi especially recognized the potential, and in their different ways both have won substantial international influence. Their efforts have added a whole new dimension to Middle Eastern anti-Semitism. Thanks to their oil wealth, the Arab states now have the means to spread calumnies about the Jews around the world, and also to insure that these views carry weight.

Arab power derives from three sources—selling oil, purchasing goods and services, and giving money away. In the scramble for energy supplies during recent years, many Western governments have seen good relations with Arab states as an urgent priority and have made numerous concessions to them. Of the major powers, France and Japan have done the most to avoid offending the Arabs, but as the Common Market's recent "European initiative" indicates, this approach is spreading to much of the Western world.

No less important than selling oil, Arab states massively acquire goods and services, usually paying premium prices. For many firms, winning an Arab contract can easily spell the difference between a mediocre year and a great one. The Arab oil states bring business to everyone: financiers, lawyers, manufacturers, shippers, builders, architects, scientists, academics, advertisers, and even governments.

WESTERNERS invariably note the extreme importance of personal relations when doing business in the Middle East, where sales often hinge on maintaining good relations with buyers more than on considerations of quality and price. Spelled out, this means the importance of agreement on the issue which the Arabs bring up most often and with the greatest passion: Israel. Politicians concerned about oil supplies and salesmen seeking contracts know they must show sensitivity and sympathy for the Arab view on Israel; not surprisingly, this pressure begins to change their views. Since the Arabs hold all the cards in these transactions and also the more steadfast opinions, invariably they are accommodated, and their views soon come to pervade the institutions that deal with them—foreign ministries and oil corporations most dramatically, but many others too. Even if they had not harbored such sentiments before, and even if they are

* Still, it is worth bearing in mind that among Muslims, anti-Semitism, although gaining in strength, remains for the most part a political weapon and not a profound social illness. Anwar Sadat's case is evidence of this: in 1954 he wrote a eulogy of Hitler and in 1977 he took the courageous step of making peace with Israel.

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not so crude as Billy Carter who famously observed that "there's a helluva lot more Arabians than there is Jews," employees quickly realize that a dash of anti-Semitism helps make friends and land contracts in the Middle East.

Not only do Arab states provide outstanding new markets, their governments and private citizens have also become the world's foremost philanthropists. At a time when many other sources of funds have dried up as a result of oil price increases, OPEC wealth attracts all those hoping for money—from African states in need of infrastructure to American universities seeking endowments. Arab states have an aura of wealth which bestows influence on them even when they give no money away. When they do, the competition is keen, and one way potential recipients of Arab aid vie with each other is through declarations of undying hostility to Israel.

In brief, the Arabs have managed to make Israel a pariah in international politics, the subject of more controversies—and more lopsided votes—at the United Nations than any other country. Just as Christian Europe once blamed the Jews for diverse evils in their midst, so now a motley of countries regularly reviles Israel and blames it for its problems. With over twenty votes at the United Nations, control over much of the world's disposable oil, and vast financial resources, the Arabs have the power to impose their views on others and have used it to raise anti-Semitism to the level of international politics.

The Soviet Union has of course been an invaluable partner in this enterprise, since it finds Israel useful for galvanizing an anti-Western consensus internationally and for justifying its own anti-Semitic policies internally. Nor should we ignore the willing cooperation of many Westerners—Protestant groups, human-rights activists, reporters, academic committees, and an increasing number of liberals—who for a variety of reasons are seeking a respectable forum in which to vent their own views about Jews. But much of this activity takes its cue, and its justification, from the Arabs.

THERE are many organizations in America whose sole order of business seems to be the supervision and judgment of Israel's every step, and which seem to know astonishing amounts about the minutiae of housing on the West Bank, electricity company ownership in Jerusalem, use of Jordan River water, and court cases adjudicating eminent domain. Such groups noisily oppose nearly every Israeli attempt at self-defense, whether it involves going after the PLO in Lebanon, purchasing American weapons, arresting terrorists, or bombing the Iraqi nuclear reactor. They show such pleasure at turning up allegations of torture or other abuses by the Israelis that one is tempted to think that their real goal is to attack Jews, not to help Arabs.

Nothing reveals this so clearly as the humanitarian concern lavished on the Palestinians. By any relative standard, human-rights issues involving Israel are minor: the Palestinians are few in number compared to the other peoples displaced in the aftermath of World War II (Germans, Koreans, Indians, Pakistanis); they do not face starvation; their lives are not in danger. Why then does their plight generate nearly as much concern as all other refugees combined? What of the Crimean Tatars, wrenched overnight from their homeland on May 18, 1944 and prohibited ever since from stepping foot in it? What of the Jewish refugees from Arab countries? The sadness of a Palestinian refugee camp hardly compares with the anguish of Vietnamese and Cambodians, and among Muslim peoples, Somalis and Afghans are currently experiencing far worse tribulations. Given the other refugee problems existing in the world which attract little or no attention, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that Palestinian welfare is of interest to many only insofar as it can be used to harm the Jews.

Israel's enemies justify their obsessive concern with it by pointing to the Jewish state's vital importance in imperiling the Arabs' oil supplies and weakening their resistance to the Soviet Union. If only Israel acceded to Arab wishes, the logic goes, the Middle East would become more stable; this, in turn, would reduce both our energy worries and the Soviet danger. In effect, Israel's enemies argue, the fate of the entire Middle East, with its massive resources, rides on tiny Israel. This improbable analysis has an uncanny resemblance to the notion that the Second Coming awaits the conversion of the Jews. In both cases, the Jews are crucial to the fate of the world—and in both, the unsolicited role that has been thrust on them both reflects and invites anti-Semitism.

In fact, Israel is not that important to the Middle East. Aside from temporary, unsustainable boycotts, it has not until now significantly influenced the international trade of petroleum; the Arab-Israeli conflict has had far less impact on oil supplies than developments within the oil states themselves, like the revolution in Iran or the Iraq-Iran war. Nor is there any reason why this should change. As for the Soviet threat, Israel, far from endangering the region, is the West's most reliable partner there, the only politically stable nation in the Middle East and the only one with the will and the means to resist Soviet encroachments.

In orchestrating their campaign against Israel, Arab spokesmen have made a great point of distinguishing between anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism, but in real life this distinction turns out to be specious. Although in theory, hostility to Israel need not affect Jews elsewhere in the world (and Arab spokesmen repeat this *ad nauseam*), the fact that the great majority of Jews actively support Israel's

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cause makes anti-Zionism in the end look and feel no different from anti-Semitism. If anti-Zionism were really their only concern, Palestinian terrorists would not murder Jewish travelers, businessmen, and children in Western Europe; nor would they supply arms and training to German neo-Nazi paramilitary groups, as has been recently reported. The pretense of distinguishing anti-Zionism from anti-Semitism can no longer be maintained.

BUT sponsoring violence against Jews is not the worst problem created by Muslim anti-Semitism; the influence of Arab states over many of the key institutions of the Western world poses much greater long-term dangers. Insofar as it is practicable, Saudi Arabia, Libya, and other governments boycott Jews in a blanket fashion, without regard to their political orientation. This has major implications for the position of Jews in many leading businesses, professional firms, universities, and even government agencies.* (Saudi leaders not long ago refused to accept a senior British diplomat as ambassador when they learned he was Jewish.) Some Arab countries refuse to issue visas to Jews and instruct their agents to avoid dealing with them. Such attitudes make Jews an impediment to business, of course. As one American businessman noted after concluding a deal, the Libyans "simply don't want to deal with Jews or anyone else who does." At best, Jews are tacitly urged to stay away from matters Middle Eastern; at worst, they are seen as potential troublemakers who might sue or raise a furor in the press; better not to employ them at all and avoid complications. For the first time in decades, there are real incentives to make institutions *judenrein*. There are laws in the United States prohibiting this, but with care and ingenuity, they can be finessed.

It is not just in the world of international trade and diplomacy that Jews are affected by Arab anti-Semitism. Many of the best-documented cases of anti-Jewish discrimination come from the universities, perhaps because tenured professors need not fear the consequences of speaking out. Arab countries have frequently offered American universities grants and contracts which are prejudicial to Jews. Almost inevitably such grants, which are often for Middle Eastern and Islamic studies, come with strings attached. The donors expect to promote their views on politics and religion and seldom make an effort to hide their aims. They discourage Hebrew instruction, do their best to expel Jewish studies except as an aspect of European culture, and lobby to banish Israel altogether from the curriculum. Needless to say, academic institutions receiving funds from either the Arabs or their business partners (oil and construction companies in particular) come under considerable pressure to accommodate these wishes, creating an atmosphere that is unfriendly to Jews (and even more so to Israelis). The case of a young Israeli professor at the University of Texas recently created a front-page sensation when the Middle East Center there attempted to block his appointment by the department of history, fearing his presence would antagonize its Arab benefactors. Even some of the most prestigious schools in effect exclude Jews from Arabic and Islamic teaching positions; no one admits to this, of course, but the pattern of hiring is too consistent to be coincidental, especially in light of the many Jewish students and degree-holders in these fields.

SOMETIMES Arab pressures become so blatant that outside forces are compelled to intervene. In 1976, the Saudi government donated $1 million to the University of Southern California to establish the King Faisal Chair of Islamic and Arab Studies. Attached to the grant was the "understanding" that "the first incumbent of the chair shall be Professor Willard A. Beling [and that] future incumbents shall be chosen by the University in consultation with the Saudi Minister of Higher Education." Needless to say, foreign governments do not ever exercise such rights over university appointments in the United States. Beling, an ARAMCO apparatchik with slender academic credentials (and none in Islamic and Arabic studies), organized a conference in May 1978 in tribute to King Faisal. Here businessmen from forty corporations with interests in Saudi Arabia learned that the Saudis would be pleased if their firms contributed to establishing a Middle East Center at the University of Southern California, to be under the directorship of Willard A. Beling. The Center would be funded through the Middle East Center Foundation, headed by none other than the same Mr. Beling.

In the end, the proposed Middle East Center could not survive public exposure. When Jewish groups challenged the many irregularities in funding and control, and Los Angeles newspapers made those irregularities known, the USC board of trustees eventually voted down the original arrangements. This led a vice president of the Fluor Corporation, a leading proponent of the Middle East Center, to accuse "the Jewish press" of distorting the whole affair.

But violating procedures in this way is rare for the Saudis, who usually press their views with considerably more tact and subtlety. For the most part, their anti-Semitism tends to take vaguer and

* Arab pressure has much less influence on small business, minor newspapers, community colleges, and local politicians (who have little to offer them) than on the largest corporations, the press empires, the national networks, the greatest universities, and the federal government. These come into the most frequent contact with Arabs and profit the most by assuaging them. And they set the pace for the smaller institutions.

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less provable forms—it is a matter of mood rather than overt action. (After all, there is no legal recourse for someone simply made to feel unwelcome.) With time, Arab tactics in the West are becoming increasingly refined and less susceptible to the kind of public exposure resulting from the University of Southern California case.

Indeed, much of the problem lies in the growing respectability of Muslim anti-Semitism as it affects the most central and important institutions of America. Put another way, the problem lies far more with Saudi Arabia than with Libya. Libya has a reputation, well-deserved, for encouraging fanatical and violent movements. Because Qaddafi is beyond the pale, and very few Americans risk association with him, his scope for mischief has steadily narrowed. But the same is not true of other Arab states. This was dramatically illustrated in February 1981 when the trustees of Georgetown University voted to return to Libya, with interest, $600,000 for endowing a chair in its Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, but at the same time retained about $3.5 million from other Arab governments. A spokesman for a Jewish organization did not protest this distinction, noting that "only the Libyan grant struck us as offensive inasmuch as Colonel Qaddafi was the underwriter of the grant as well as of international terrorism."

Rarely are the Saudis or the Persian Gulf sheikhdoms accused of supporting terrorism (despite their aid to the PLO and numerous other groups) for these countries are America's allies and widely deemed conservative and moderate. Yet in the matter of anti-Semitism, they are not outdone by Libyans, Iraqis, Iranians, or other radicals. The Saudi danger exceeds the Libyan one precisely because of Saudi Arabia's good reputation and generally reasonable language; some of the most reputable politicians and lawyers in Washington are numbered among its lobbyists. Never in America has anti-Semitism enjoyed such reputable sponsorship, never has it crept into so many central institutions.

Thus it is that anti-Semitic tendencies already present in America and Europe are further encouraged by Arab money, with potentially disastrous effects. Ironically, the new Muslim anti-Semitism is in some ways less of a threat to Jews in the Middle East, where it remains a foreign import without local roots, than it is to Jews in the Western countries, where it touches a very deep nerve.

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The Case of Janet Cooke

Naomi Munson

WHEN "Jimmy's World," the story of an eight-year-old heroin addict, appeared on the front page of the Washington *Post* last September, it created quite a stir in the city. According to Janet Cooke, the young black woman who reported the story, "Jimmy" (a pseudonym) had been on heroin since the age of five, when he'd been introduced to the stuff by his mother's boyfriend, "Ron." Jimmy and his Mom lived in Ron's house, a "shooting gallery" where junkies came regularly to buy and use heroin. Besides being an addict, Jimmy was a truant from school and spoke in a lingo ("Don't nobody here hardly ever smoke no herb") that would put Superfly to shame.

The local government reacted to this grisly tale by launching an intensive search for the child. When schools, social-welfare services, and police all failed to unearth any trace of him, the authorities requested that the *Post* reveal Jimmy's whereabouts.

The *Post* refused. There was, first of all, Miss Cooke's personal safety to consider: it seems that Ron had threatened to come after her with a knife at the first sign of police interest in *him*. So terrifying was this prospect that Miss Cooke had felt constrained to keep the true identity of her sources secret even from her immediate superiors. Then, of course, the *Post* recognized a First Amendment issue when it saw one. Where soldiers and statesmen had failed in their efforts to abridge the constitutional guarantees of freedom of the press, was a mere child to be permitted to open a breach in the wall? When the mayor and police chief threatened to subpoena Miss Cooke's notes, *Post* staffers professed themselves ready to face jail sooner than capitulate to the pressure.

Luck was with the *Post;* after nearly three weeks' fruitless search, the mayor seemed inclined to let the matter fizzle and announced that in any case he had heard the story was only "part myth, part reality." But the *Post* itself went on looking. The paper sent eleven reporters into the "inner city" to find Jimmy—to get him some help, but also on the premise that there must be dozens more Jimmies out there, and thus presumably dozens more stories.

This crack *Post* team—which included Janet Cooke herself—failed as thoroughly as had the municipal authorities. When Miss Cooke was asked by a colleague to point out Ron's house, she was unable to do so. When, shortly thereafter, she was ordered to set up a meeting between Jimmy and her editor, she agreed, only to report back that the family had moved away.

Doubts about the veracity of Miss Cooke's story began to flicker in the mind of Milton Coleman, *Post* city editor and Miss Cooke's direct boss. Coleman himself had been privy to, and had dismissed, the suspicions of others on the *Post* staff. Thus, a reporter who had accompanied Miss Cooke on the search for other Jimmies described to Coleman her obvious unfamiliarity with the neighborhood and her inability to point out Jimmy's house, and voiced some misgivings about the story; Coleman put these down to professional jealousy. The editor of another section of the paper, where Miss Cooke had worked for a year and a half until her promotion to the city desk, revealed to Coleman after the story was published that she had had problems with Janet's stretching or distorting of the truth; Coleman shrugged this off as an editor's irritation at losing a reporter to another division. But when, three weeks after the story was published, Miss Cooke was unable to produce her star witness for Coleman, and offered the flimsy excuse that the family had suddenly moved to Baltimore, Coleman's faith was shaken.

But not shaken enough, apparently, to make Coleman think twice before recommending "Jimmy's World" for a Pulitzer prize nomination—and for four other awards as well—more than a month after the family's disappearing act. Nor did doubts about Jimmy's existence disturb Coleman's own boss, Bob Woodward (of Watergate fame). The misgivings of Miss Cooke's colleagues were ascribed by Woodward, as by Coleman, to professional jealousy. Criticism from outside the *Post* served only to send Woodward into what he described as his "Watergate mode: protect the source and back the reporter." In fact, questions raised by the mayor and police chief hardened Woodward's resolve

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to see Miss Cooke's story nominated for the Pulitzer. His approach, he later explained, was "in for a dime, in for a dollar": not to have backed the nomination would have been tantamount to an admission that the paper had published a questionable report. Woodward duly convinced *his* bosses to nominate the story, and "Jimmy's World" was sent to the Pulitzer committee as an entrant in the local news category.

In the event, the judges honored another story in that category, but decided to reconsider Miss Cooke's under a different rubric—feature writing; in doing so they bypassed the jury that normally screens entries (this is not an unheard of action, though it is highly unpopular with Pulitzer juries). When one member of the board dismissed Jimmy as an "aberration," Roger Wilkins, an editorialist for the Washington *Star*, undertook to respond—as the only black and the only Washingtonian present. Wilkins explained that while many Washington blacks were skeptical of the story's accuracy, he himself believed it to be true and thought it an important piece of work, because too many whites were ignorant of and indifferent to the disastrous effects of drugs in the black community. Wilkins asserted, moreover, on the basis of his own experience as an urban-affairs reporter, that he could find eight-year-old junkies within a ten-block radius of the board's meeting place on New York's Upper West Side. When the vote came, it was unanimous (with one abstention); the Pulitzer prize for feature writing was awarded to "Jimmy's World."

The *Post* management was jubilant. The bestowal of journalism's most coveted award helped to still the rumblings of doubt in the newsroom, and the Jimmy episode seemed destined to fade quietly away.

Nobody counted on Janet Cooke—who had, it soon turned out, been less than entirely honest about her past when seeking work at the Washington *Post*. Not content with her own achievements in life, she had embroidered her résumé, claiming a B.A. (magna cum laude) from Vassar, an M.A. from the University of Toledo, and fluency in several languages. When the time came to provide a curriculum vitae for the Pulitzer committee, to be published if she won, she added a year at the Sorbonne and a couple of more languages for good measure. The release of Miss Cooke's autobiography was the beginning of the end for little Jimmy.

Staffers at the Toledo, Ohio, *Blade*, where Miss Cooke had worked before going to the *Post*, noticed discrepancies between their own records and the version of Miss Cooke's life published by the Associated Press. Further checking by the AP and the *Blade* revealed that Miss Cooke had attended Vassar for one year, and that she had not an M.A. but only a B.A. from the University of Toledo. Calls from the AP and Vassar began coming in to the *Post*. Ben Bradlee, executive editor, and his staff realized that if Janet Cooke's word was all that stood between "Jimmy's World" and disgrace, the fortress was poorly defended indeed. The time had finally come to check out the story.

Accordingly, they sat Miss Cooke down and grilled her. The first stage in the process began in a bar, where Milton Coleman and Miss Cooke each drank a ginger ale. She eventually admitted that she had had to leave Vassar for emotional reasons after her first year but stuck to her guns on everything else. The interrogation continued in the *Post* offices. During the course of it Bradlee accused Miss Cooke of being like Richard Nixon, and Woodward swore he would prove the Jimmy story false if it was the last thing he ever did. It ended after many hours when Miss Cooke admitted that not only her résumé but also her story was false.

The next day the *Post* announced it had discovered that the story was a "hoax" and requested that the Pulitzer be withdrawn. The prize was handed over to the runner-up; Janet Cooke resigned, with apologies "to my newspaper, my profession, the Pulitzer board, and all seekers of the truth"; and the Washington *Post* went about the business of trying to salvage some of its credibility.

That process began with an editorial asserting that "We Apologize." Actually, far from apologizing, the column threw up its hands at the enormity of Janet Cooke's lies, comparing her first to a bank embezzler and then to "some giant weapons system that can come in under the radar." The reading public, however, could take heart from the thought that small lies and distortions were less likely to appear in print than total fabrications; for though the editorial process had been unable to deal with "the sheer magnitude and breathtaking gall of [Miss Cooke's] deception," it had no problem with "far less spectacular but more commonplace slides and lapses." Nor, the *Post* opined, should "students and critics of the press" turn their back on the Constitution simply because Miss Cooke (and the *Post*, in all innocence) had used it to protect her deception: "constitutional values," the editorial intoned, "are no less vital today than they were before." The editorial ended by assuring readers that "more of the skepticism and heat that our colleagues traditionally bring to bear on the outside world will now be trained on our own interior workings."

The *Post*'s first attempt at such internal "skepticism and heat" took the form of a 12,000-word report on the episode, written by *Post* "ombudsman" Bill Green and published the Sunday after the Pulitzer prize was withdrawn. (My reconstruction of the Janet Cooke episode is largely drawn from the facts provided in the report.) Green, who stressed that he was "invited," not ordered, by Bradlee to prepare the report, promised to an-

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swer the questions, "How did it all happen? Why?"

Perhaps the most striking feature of Green's reconstruction is his own eye for detail. He informs us, for example, that "Milton Coleman is a rangy, tall man. . . . He pursues news as though it's his quarry. . . . He likes to work in a vest." Janet Cooke, he reveals, first wrote to Ben Bradlee about a job on July 12, 1979, "eleven days before her twenty-fifth birthday." Bob Woodward is "tough, determined, persistent" and "frequently the first of the *Post*'s top staff in the office in the morning and among the last to leave at night." Ben Bradlee, Green enthuses restrainedly, is "luminescent." (Bradlee's luminescence did not prevent him from living in blissful ignorance of the tidewater of chaos rising around him, apparently unaware that police, welfare workers, and even eleven of his own reporters were out scouring the town for the elusive Jimmy.)

Miss Cooke herself, according to Green, was "striking, smartly dressed, articulate. . . . And she could write." Her writing, indeed, was so impressive that "the usual check of references was done in a cursory manner" before she was hired to work on one of the *Post*'s local weekly sections. During her year and a half on the weekly, in the words of Vivian Aplin-Brownlee, her editor there, Miss Cooke displayed a tendency to write "further than the truth would allow. When challenged on facts . . . Janet would reverse herself, but without dismay or consternation." Despite this small peccadillo, Miss Cooke's byline appeared fifty-two times before she moved on to the Jimmy story and promotion to the *Post*'s daily metropolitan edition.

On the issue of Miss Cooke's lack of respect for facts, Miss Aplin-Brownlee remembers that "I had been tough on Janet. She knew it and I knew it." One person who did not know it, on the evidence of his actions at least, was Milton Coleman: he gave Miss Cooke, a relatively green reporter whom everyone knew to be unfamiliar with "the streets," a virtually free hand in the Jimmy story. Neither Coleman nor any other editor ever requested a source for Jimmy from Miss Cooke. On the contrary, they made it quite clear from the outset that they would not make any such request.

Green's report is tediously complete on the how of it all: Miss Cooke's bosses simply chose to take her word on the Jimmy story as they had chosen to take her word on her own background. After publication, when questions arose within the paper as well as outside, the editors simply chose again: to dismiss internal skepticism as envy and to regard the public outcry as interference with constitutional protections of freedom of the press. When the Pultizer nomination came up, they chose yet again, this time to behave as if the story were rock-solid and to go ahead with the nomination.

That the rules of the profession were suspended where Miss Cooke was concerned is thus perfectly clear. That they were suspended not only in relation to "Jimmy's World" but in relation to Miss Cooke's entire career at the *Post* is equally obvious. Where Green's report fails is in providing any reasonable explanation as to why Miss Cooke merited such special treatment.

Green does give a half-hearted try. He dwells, for example, on Miss Cooke's personal panache: "When she walked, she pranced. When she smiled, she dazzled." He speaks poetically of the trust that must inform relations between editor and reporter: "The jugular of journalism lay exposed—the faith an editor has to place in a reporter." Green even touches on the role of affirmative action, only to dismiss it: "Did race," he asks, "have anything to do with Miss Cooke's ascendancy?. . . There's some yes and some I-don't-know in any honest answer." Green himself opts for neither yes nor I-don't-know. "Race may," he concludes, "have played some role, but professional pride and human decency were deeply involved in this story and that has not a diddle to do with race."

Alexander Cockburn, media "critic" of the *Village Voice*, and one who no doubt possesses more solid radical credentials than Green, finds a stronger connection between Janet Cooke's "problem" and her race. In fact, in his column on the subject, he pronounces it no wonder that Miss Cooke, being black, "felt she had to play harder and faster" in the *Post*'s highly competitive atmosphere.

Roger Wilkins, in his own editorial on the Cooke case, is not so quick as Cockburn to excuse Miss Cooke. Wilkins, indeed, implies that Miss Cooke is something of a discredit to her race. "The greatest injury Miss Cooke has done," he believes, is to her fellow black journalists who "struggle . . . every day" against "white editors who doubt our perceptions, our judgment, and our ability to be fair and accurate."

But one cannot help feeling that Wilkins might have chosen a more felicitous context for this portrait of the black man's burden in the white world of journalism. In relation to Miss Cooke, whose work suffered from an *excess* of trust on the part of her editors, black and white, the notion that blacks are at a disadvantage in the newsroom is simply fantastic.

Equally untenable is Cockburn's view that Janet Cooke had to "play harder and faster." For she quite unmistakably did nothing of the kind. On the contrary, Miss Cooke consistently took the reporter's easy way out: she invented things. She had learned, from her experience at the *Post* and for all one knows at the Toledo *Blade* as well, that far from needing to play hard and fast, she could play fast and loose with the truth and get away with it.

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No less inconsistent with the facts of the case is Bill Green's contention that the Janet Cooke story had less to do with race than with "professional pride" and "human decency." Does the *Post*'s arrogant dismissal of doubts about a story it had published constitute evidence of professional pride? Was the paper's determination to "protect" an eight-year-old heroin addict from police and welfare workers a manifestation of human decency?

Green's analysis of events, like Cockburn's and Wilkins's, conflicts not only with what we know of Janet Cooke and her career, but also with what we know of the professional working world. In that world today, the principles of affirmative action—that blacks must be hired, treated, and promoted preferentially—are accepted as a matter of course. And nowhere is this more the case than in the news business.

Having recently spent nearly a decade with a major news organization, I can testify to the widespread and entrenched nature of this phenomenon. "We really need more blacks" was a frequent refrain where I worked, as if black employees were a necessary staple, like typewriter ribbons or telex machines. And keeping the supply at the proper level often entailed rather creative hiring and firing decisions; one black employee, for example, whose work merited summary dismissal, could not be fired until another black had been found to fill the void—a process that took months.

Among my colleagues, both black and white, instances of particular preferential treatment engendered a certain amount of cynicism and even quiet jeering, but there was never any move to reject the policies from which such treatment arose. Rather, there was a general and entirely open consensus that the policies were only proper, only just. Moreover, that these policies implied the institution of numerical racial quotas was understood—except, perhaps, by some beneficiaries of these quotas. I will always remember the shock of one young black colleague of mine, a true believer in "reparational" hiring programs, when he learned that there was a quota system in our office and that he himself, however well-qualified, constituted one of its statistics.

What was left unexpressed in all this—and would have been denied in any case—was the feeling that implementing preferential hiring policies inevitably required some lowering of standards. Thus, for example, one black writer whose work consistently needed heavy editing was touted as "a fine little writer." This writer, quite well-educated and not inarticulate, suffered from the terror and paralysis that sometimes afflict people in the face of a blank sheet of paper. The editors, however, having accepted along with the technicalities of affirmative action its underlying assumption that blacks cannot succeed on their own merits, clearly would have regarded any admission that this "fine" writer was in fact no writer at all as a subtle expression of racism. In their eyes—and it must be remembered that such people, for the most part, come from a class where acquaintanceship with blacks is limited to the household help—a black employee who was well-spoken and decorous was about the best to be hoped for. Under the circumstances, a chic and attractive Vassar graduate must have seemed to the Washington *Post* too good to pass up.

Given the realities of affirmative action, it is patently obvious that Miss Cooke was hired quickly and easily because she was black, and a woman to boot: the film critic Judith Crist, who was on the screening jury that never screened "Jimmy's World" for the Pulitzer board, has described Miss Cooke as a "twofer," a candidate who meets both racial and sexual requirements. It should be no less obvious that her career was fostered and promoted, despite her "problem" with truth-stretching, because she was black. In this regard the letter she received from the publisher of the *Post*, Donald Graham, after the appearance of "Jimmy's World," is quite explicit: "The *Post*," he wrote, "has no more important or tougher job than explaining life in the black community in Washington. A special burden gets put on black reporters doing that job. . . . You belong very high up among them." And it seems equally clear that Miss Cooke won her Pulitzer because she was black; "we really," one can almost hear the internal machinery clacking at the board meeting, "need a black."

RACE, then, undeniably played a large and significant role in what Bill Green describes as Janet Cooke's "ascendancy" at the Washington *Post*, and the role it played was entirely different from the one suggested by Alexander Cockburn and other apologists. But there are other elements in the episode that must be given consideration as well.

Miss Cooke herself, first of all, must be held accountable for her own dishonesty; and the *Post* must be held accountable for rewarding and promoting that dishonesty. If Miss Cooke had the good fortune to live in a world that granted her special privileges as a black and as a woman, she also found herself in a profession that provided fertile ground for her "creative" talents. The debacle of "Jimmy's World" was, in short, the child not only of affirmative action but of a phenomenon that might be called newsman's disease.

Like other diseases, this affliction arises from a disruption of the natural order of things. Reporters have traditionally seen their proper function as one of sniffing out facts, but more and more these days they have come to regard themselves, instead, in a grander light, as bloodhounds of the "truth." Whereas a sniffer-out of facts might be thought to bear a special obligation to provide those facts

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complete and uncolored by his own opinions, many journalists, including many I have known personally, feel no such obligation, but rather seem to consider themselves endowed with some sort of special gift for knowing the truth. The duty to be objective has been transmuted into the certainty of omniscience.

One manifestation of the sickness is a contempt for the intelligence and good sense of ordinary people. The audience for news is considered chronically short on information and long on prejudice. If, for example, people should choose to vote in large numbers for Ronald Reagan, they are regarded as having done so not on the basis of rational thought and conscious decision but in ignorance of or in callous indifference to the "truth" about Reagan, a truth which on inspection turns out usually to correspond to the political opinions generally approved within the news community.

Another symptom of the disease is the routine imputation of base motives to almost anyone, however well-educated or thoughtful, whose view of the world differs from that propounded in the news community. Such differences are often ascribed to ulterior purposes that must be unsavory, especially if they are linked to demands that the news community be called to account for its own practices and in-built biases. To complete the circle, such demands are considered nothing but a disguised intention to interfere with the news community's precious right to dominion over the truth.*

Thus it was that when the editors of the Washington *Post* heard doubts about Janet Cooke's work, even those expressed by her own peers, they automatically dismissed them as being of venal origins. These editors operated under the serene assurance that their role as keepers of the flame of truth entitled them to behavior which in any other profession they themselves would have decried as corruption. In their arrogance, they decided to publish a wholly anonymous and undocumented story, then slipped into the "Watergate mode" of denouncing questions about it as unwarranted and illegal interference, and then promoted the story for an award as if no doubts had ever existed.

It was this same sort of arrogance that clearly led Michael Daly of the New York *Daily News* to believe he could get away with inventing an eyewitness to describe to him events in Northern Ireland. And it no doubt also prompted Teresa Carpenter of the *Village Voice* to feel she had the right to present secondhand quotations from the assassin of Allard Lowenstein as the product of a personal interview (in a story, incidentally, that won her the Pulitzer forfeited by Janet Cooke).

Does it seem too much to ask that reporters get back to the business of uncovering the facts and leave the rest of us to muddle through to the truth in our own blind, groping way?

As FOR Janet Cooke, while "Jimmy's World" clearly spells the end of her newspaper career, the episode could open up new vistas of opportunity for her. She might, after a decent interval, find herself once again in the limelight, a kind of negative celebrity *à la* Clifford Irving; there is even some talk of a book contract. We may, in short, soon be privy to the "inside story" of the Janet Cooke case.

The real implications of that case, meanwhile, seem likely to meet only with more of the rejection and denial evinced by Green, Cockburn, Wilkins, and the rest. They will carry on, unshaken in the conviction that their profession places them above suspicion. And they will, it appears, go on totting up the racial balance sheet, heedless of the deleterious effects of such calculations on the community in general, and on the self-respect and reputation of their black colleagues in particular.

* For an examination of this syndrome from within, see Joseph Kraft's "The Imperial Media" in the May COMMENTARY.

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The Noblest Distraction

Joseph Epstein

THE bookworm, like the tapeworm, is omnivorous. He joins Freud's appetitive types, those fornicators and feeders who wish each in their own fashion to devour the world, by virtue of his wish to devour all the books in the world. Well, if not all the books in the world, at least all the good books. But even this limited goal, it soon becomes apparent, is impossible. Given life's routine chores—earning a living, raising a family, watering and feeding oneself—a bookish person does well to read two books a week. This means that, from the age of twenty to seventy-five, one can best read something on the order of fifty-five hundred books in the course of a lengthy and fairly sedentary life. Fifty-five hundred is a piddling small number when one realizes that roughly 40,000 books are produced annually in the United States alone. Not that all of these are good; but probably two hundred or so of them are; and when one adds all the good new books to the vastly larger store of excellent books written in the past, the hopelessness of the task becomes clear.

Since one cannot read all the world's books, or even all the quite good books, what books ought one to read? Are there criteria? The late Alexander Gerschenkron, an economic historian at Harvard who read widely in belles lettres, offered three such criteria in an essay of a few years ago entitled "On Reading." Gerschenkron's criteria were that a good book must be (1) intrinsically interesting, (2) memorable, and (3) rereadable. These criteria are at once impeccable and utterly unhelpful. One cannot know if a book is interesting until one has begun to read it, or memorable until after one has finished reading it, or rereadable until one reads through it a second time.

Still, advice about what to read seems always to have been wanted and never in short supply. In 1771, one Robert Skipwith, a future brother-in-law of Mrs. Jefferson, asked the then twenty-eight-year-old Thomas Jefferson to draw up a list of books "suited to the capacity of a common reader who understands but little of the classicks and who has not leisure for any intricate or tedious study. Let them be improving and amusing." Jefferson obliged with a list of 148 titles, mostly solid classical works, but including such practical volumes as Tull's *Horse-hoeing Husbandry* and Nourse's *Compendium of Physic and Surgery*. Later there came the famous Harvard Five-Foot Shelf, with its assumption that the books elected were the truly indispensable ones for Americans to read; and, later still, Encyclopaedia Britannica produced *Great Books of the Western World*, which included fifty-four volumes, illustrating, for those who prefer their intellectual fare thoroughly tidy, 102 Great Ideas.

For a great many years now newspapers, reviews, and journals have been asking well-known writers to offer their lists of great or good or pleasurable books. In 1886, in response to a letter from the editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette* asking that he list what he considered to be the world's one hundred best books, Henry James wrote that, thank you all the same, he would just as soon not do so. His only strong conviction on the subject, James told the newspaper editor, "is simply that the reading of the newspaper is *the* pernicious habit, and the father of all idleness and laxity." In more recent times, our writers have been more forthcoming, and lists of their favorite reading dot the Sunday supplements. How helpful these are to others depends on how much one cares to read the same books as, say, John Kenneth Galbraith has read.

Most serious readers, though, whose bookish appetites are not satisfied by any of the above solutions, are left to go at things their own way. They travel desultorily across the bookscape. They learn about good books from friends. An occasional review piques their interest. In the pages of one book the existence of another is revealed. They hang about in used bookstores. With rather less hope, they check the display tables of new bookstores. They acquire books—to cite three recent acquisitions of my own: *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, an eight-volume set of the essays of Agnes Repplier, Michelet's two-volume *Histoire de la Révolution Française*—that they probably have little hope of reading in this lifetime. Still, one never knows—or at least tells oneself that one doesn't.

How useful it would be to have an authoritative

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list of books that, despite the world's generally high opinion of them, one really need *not* read: books greatly overrated or overwritten—books that somehow or other do not come near repaying the time required to read them. But whom could one trust to prepare such a list? Even the most intelligent have their blind spots—recall Tolstoy's aversion to Shakespeare. Some tastes, though refined, are almost too catholic: V. S. Pritchett has admired in print more books than I expect ever to be able to read. In the matter of exclusion one takes help wherever one can find it. I have felt no need to read Carl Sandburg's monumental biography of Lincoln because of Edmund Wilson's crushing attack on it in *Patriotic Gore*. I stayed away—wrongly, as I have since discovered—from James Gould Cozzens on the basis of Dwight Macdonald's attack on him in COMMENTARY of more than twenty years ago.

NONE of the novels of James Gould Cozzens, I note, is an entry in the Fiction category of the most recent piece of advice to readers, a book entitled *The List of Books, A Library of Over 3,000 Works** by Frederic Raphael and Kenneth McLeish. Raphael is an English novelist best known for *The Glittering Prizes*, a novel made into a television serial shown over PBS a few years ago; McLeish is a broadcast journalist in England who has written books on music and on Greek theater, and done translations of Aristophanes and Sophocles. *The List of Books*, Raphael and McLeish tell us, was composed to help readers choose what to read, for the problem, as they rightly formulate it, is nowadays less one of having access to books than of choosing among them.

Raphael and McLeish write that "To enter a library is immediately to be seized by a kind of panic; one risks starving among such plenty." To calm this panic they propose "*an* imaginary library, not *the* imaginary library," by which they mean that they do not intend their list to be the last word. Yet one has to assume that the books they do include they have found to be instructive or inspiring, amusing or artful. Their method of selection was to ask a great many friends and acquaintances—"collaborators," they call them—to make lists of books in subjects in which they have some standing as experts. The authors (no doubt in some instances helped by their collaborators) then supplied snappy capsule comments of a line or two about the books that made the final list. Next to some of these books they have also supplied symbols, thus letting readers know that a particular book "is a standard work on the subject," or "major masterpiece," or "recommended for beginners in the subject," or "seminal book that changed our thinking," and so forth.

When dispensing advice, as *The List of Books* does, it is best to allow nothing to impugn one's authority. Unfortunately, in the case of Raphael and McLeish, there has been many a slip 'twixt the *kop* and the list. They misspell Loren Eiseley's last name and call Paul Bowles John. Willa Cather turns out to be even more of a born writer than one had supposed, for according to Raphael and McLeish, she wrote *The Song of the Lark* in 1875, when she was minus one. Studs Terkel's book *Working* is cited in a list entitled "Coming to Grips with the 20th Century," as *Work*. One soon begins to think that the authors' "imaginary" library is aptly named because the authors, dates of publication, and titles of many of their books do not exist.

Errors of an ampler kind do not so much creep as march in. H. W. Fowler, whose *A Dictionary of Modern English Usage* is recommended in *The List of Books*, is cited for his "outspoken adherence to the rule of law in written English," when in fact Fowler was something of a radical in his day and a man who almost always preferred common sense over strict law. In an entry on *The Middle of the Journey*, Lionel Trilling is called the "pundit of American liberalism," which he wasn't; and then, in an entry for *The Liberal Imagination*, that book is described as containing "essays mostly on English novels," which it doesn't. James Baldwin's novel *Another Country* makes the list, with the added comment, "Much better than *Giovanni's Room*—trash which brought him fame," a line every word of which is incorrect. It wasn't his novels but chiefly his essays—which go unmentioned in *The List of Books*—that have brought Baldwin such distinction as he has had. *Another Country* (written after *Giovanni's Room*) is in fact the first of James Baldwin's rather overwrought novels to have brought him fame.

These capsule comments serve multiple purposes. Often they take the form of wisecracks; sometimes of cheap shots. An example of the cheap shot is putting Saul Bellow's early novel *The Victim* on the list, followed by the comment that it is "one of his good early books . . . before *The Adventures of Augie March* (1953) led to fame and fat." On occasion they are used as receptacles for paradox, as when Raphael and McLeish define Benjamin Robert Haydon, whose *Autobiography and Journals* is on the list, as "a painter with genius but no talent." Every so often a capsule comment will be directly on target, as when C. P. Snow's *The Masters*, the best novel in his *Strangers and Brothers* series, is described as the "jewel in a sometimes wooden crown." But more frequently the characteristic note is failed cuteness, as in the authors' comment on *Jane Eyre*, which begins: "'Realistic' wish fulfillment in which the wishbone sticks in the heroine's throat. . . ."

Although classic and standard works stud the pages of *The List of Books*, there are some odd absences. There is a section on Film Books, but the

* Harmony Books, 160 pp., $12.95.

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movie criticism of neither James Agee nor Robert Warshow appears in it. None of the many historical works of Marc Bloch is cited. In Anthropology Margaret Mead makes the list but Ruth Benedict, a more complicated and finely textured thinker, does not. In Travel Sir Richard Burton's *A Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage to Al-Madinah and Mecca* is listed but not Charles Doughty's *Arabia Deserta*. Gershom Scholem's books fail to appear under Religion, while a feminist work of Mariolatry, *Alone of All Her Sex* by Marina Warner (1978), does. George Santayana, one of the great English prose artists, is nowhere mentioned. Perhaps he was considered, then removed to make room for such writers as Erica Jong, Chaim Potok, Kurt Vonnegut, Alvin Toffler, Gore Vidal, Alistair Cooke, and James Clavell.

As that lineup of literary names reveals, one strong tendency of *The List of Books* is toward the middlebrow. Another tendency, though less decided, is toward the left-wing political. This comes through in occasional touches of British anti-Americanism, such as giving classic status to books heavily ideological in their intent—David Halberstam's *The Best and the Brightest* and Frances FitzGerald's *Fire in the Lake,* for two examples, represent *The List of Books'* view on Vietnam. Sacco and Vanzetti, whose *The Letters of Sacco and Vanzetti* is on the list, are judged "probably" not guilty for the crimes for which they were executed. Lenny Bruce's humor is said to pick "the scabs of Western decadence." In short, Raphael and McLeish seem always at home to receive current received wisdom. One wishes that they had read, in their own phrase, more of the kind of "seminal books that changed our thinking."

But above and beyond their penchant for the middlebrow and their vague leftism, the authors of *The List of Books* are most notable for their trendiness. This comes through not only in the books that appear in their various categories—*The Essential Lenny Bruce,* Norman Mailer's *Marilyn,* Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth,* Simon Frith's *The Sociology of Rock*—but in many of the categories into which their book has been divided. Science Fiction gets a category to itself, so does Crime Fiction and Thrillers, and so, too, does Occult and Paranormal. Sex and Love has its own category, and in it Ovid and Boccaccio nuzzle Terry Southern and Dr. Alex Comfort—a case surely of what Anthony Hecht has recently called "Civilization and its Discothèques."

Feminism of course has its own category, and the books within it tend to be puffed up with blurby capsules. Of Kate Millett's *Sexual Politics,* Raphael and McLeish remark that her "attacks upon Mailer, Lawrence, *et al.* (if flawed) make one shout for joy." Of Germaine Greer's *The Female Eunuch* they write: "Makes stylish mincemeat of the charge that feminists are humorless." Yet over in the Fiction category they offer the opinion that Doris Lessing, in *The Golden Notebook,* "was a pioneer of the unsmiling stance of modern feminism; her language is the mundane consequence of the rejection of wit." In *The List of Books* the law of contradictions does not seem to apply. A writer is praised for attacking another writer—Kate Millett on Norman Mailer is an example—whom Raphael and McLeish themselves praise in another place. A bandwagon is leapt upon on one page, and booed at as it goes by six or seven pages later. This trendy absence of anything resembling a serious point of view is what makes *The List of Books* in the end seem less like an imaginary library than like a real used bookstore located near a third-rate university.

Could I myself, then, come up with a better list? If pressed, I think I could. I would remove some of the more egregious middlebrow choices (the Durants' *The Story of Civilization,* for example); I would fill in remaining lacunae with books of substance (the various collections of the letters of Justice Holmes, for example); I would add books notable for their charm (like those by Alain, Maurice Baring, A. J. Liebling, for examples). In place of capsule comments telling readers what a book is about, I should tell them where a particular book might best be read: in airports, in bed, in bathtubs, at solitary meals (recall Edmund Wilson's inability to read the Marquis de Sade at breakfast), in the country, on the subway, etc. My list would specify at roughly what age a book ought to be read; no F. Scott Fitzgerald beyond thirty; no Chekhov before thirty; no Proust before forty; no James Joyce after fifty.

But I am far from sure that even these alterations would accomplish much. Every list has its limitations, and these are built in, for the books a person reads form the index to his intellectual autobiography, and every autobiography is different. What is more, every list of books is an implicit answer to two earnest and by no means easy questions: How does one become an educated person? and What books ought an educated person to have read? Is a well-read man or woman someone who seems to have read everything? Or someone who has read the hundred or so key books of Western culture with true penetration?

In "Of Kings' Treasuries"—originally a lecture delivered on December 6, 1864, to help establish a library at the Rusholme Institute near Manchester—Ruskin divided books into two classes, "the books of the hour, and the books for all time." But even this distinction is not as simple as it sounds, for Ruskin went on to say that there "are good books for the hour, and good ones for all time; bad books for the hour, and bad ones for all time." The good book of the hour—Ruskin felt no need to speak of the bad one—"is simply the useful or pleasant talk of some person whom you cannot otherwise converse with, printed for you."

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Yet the worst mistake, according to Ruskin, is to read such books to the exclusion of true books—books meant to be preserved—books "true and useful, or helpfully beautiful." The bad and good, the transient and the permanent—"these are all at your choice," so says Ruskin, "and life is short."

Much of Ruskin's lecture is taken up with how one can best read (entering into the thought of others, and not merely looking for your own to be expressed in their pages), and with what stands in the way of more profitable reading (partial literacy, childish habits of thought), yet there is no question but that for Ruskin reading ought to play a preponderant role in life. Marcel Proust, who as a young man translated Ruskin's *Sesame and Lilies*—of which "Of Kings' Treasuries" is a part—disagreed with Ruskin, and radically. In his preface to his translation, entitled *Sur la lecture*, Proust set out the grounds of his disagreement.

"How do you manage to know so many things, Monsieur France?" Proust is supposed to have asked Anatole France, to which France replied: "It's quite simple, my dear Marcel. When I was your age I wasn't good-looking and popular like you. So instead of going into society I stayed at home and did nothing but read." But Proust, too, as we know, had his days at home, and the world's great anatomist of passion understood very well the passion for reading. He begins his preface to Ruskin by noting: "There are perhaps no days of our childhood we lived so fully as those we believe we left without having lived them, those we spent with a favorite book."

Not the least interesting of the distinctions and comparisons Proust makes in this preface is that between reading and friendship. In fact, Proust believes that reading, which resembles friendship, is in many respects superior to it. When we spend an evening with a book—unlike an evening with a friend—it is never out of a sense of obligation but because we truly desire to be with it. When books bore us we do not, as with friends, have to feign interest. "No more deference," writes Proust, "we laugh at what Molière says only to the exact degree we find him funny; when he bores us, we are not afraid to appear bored, and when we decidedly have had enough of being with him, we put him back in his place as bluntly as if he had neither genius nor fame." Nor do we have to worry, as with friends, whether we have given pleasure. "What did they think of us? Didn't we lack tact? Did we please. . . ? All these agitations of friendship come to an end at the threshold of that pure and calm friendship that reading is."

Yet for all the pleasure reading gives—he calls it "the noblest distraction"—for all that it is essential to the life of the civilized, reading for Proust has clear limitations. It cannot have the preponderant role in the spiritual life that Ruskin grants to it. Reading, for Proust, is an initiation into the spiritual life, an incitement to it. But it can take us only so far; it can supply only desires not conclusions. "Reading is at the threshold of spiritual life; it can introduce us to it; it does not constitute it."

Reading, in Proust's view, was useful for opening doors which we may not have known how to open without its aid. But it becomes dangerous "when instead of waking us to the personal life of the spirit, it tends to substitute itself for it, when truth no longer appears to us an ideal we can realize only through the intimate progress of our thought and the effort of our heart, but as a material thing, deposited between the leaves of books, like honey readymade by others, and which we have only to take the trouble of reaching for on the shelves of libraries and then savoring passively in perfect repose of body and mind."

THE question Proust raises is of the utmost seriousness. How far can books take one? Proust's answer is that, while books have their own uses, true knowledge is to be found in the solitude of one's own heart and mind. The traditional philistine answer is that books count for nothing, or next to it; it is experience of the world that is decisive. For the intellectual it is too often the reverse, as in the story of the professor who was courting a society woman and who felt the need to master horseback riding. The first thing he did was repair to the library, where he took out books on all possible aspects of horsemanship. He learned about the breeding of horses. He learned about their training. He learned about the riding and jumping of horses. He learned about saddlery and bits, their uses and changes in style. He learned about equestrian etiquette. He learned about proper riding clothes, with which he outfitted himself. He learned about horsemanship in its historical dimension. In short, he mastered the subject. Came the morning for him to ride out with his lady friend, twenty-five yards distance from the stable he was violently thrown from his horse. Picking himself up, dusting himself off, with great dignity the professor announced, "The horse made a mistake."

Such a story plays, of course, into the hands of the philistines, whose first article of belief in this debate is that there is no substitute for experience. Yet the dichotomy between reading and experience can be pushed too far. How, after all, does one experience 18th-century France but through reading? And cannot a balance be struck between reading and experience? Isn't one quite as incomplete a person without reading as one is incomplete without experience? "But we [Americans]," says the character Bromfield Corey in *The Rise of Silas Lapham*, "who live remote from history and monuments, we must read or we must barbarize." Which is also true.

Some of those who have evinced the gravest doubts about reading have been writers. Baudelaire famously wrote: *"Plus un homme cultive les arts, moins il bande"* (which might be freely

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translated as the more art the less sex). Tolstoy, in his religious-ethical phase toward the close of his life, had a low opinion of his own greatest books. In the most recent installment of his autobiography, *Lost in America*, I. B. Singer has a character who says, alas all too convincingly: "That's how God arranged it—that those who know life can't write, while those blessed with talent are dreamers who know only their own fantasies."

Saul Bellow's later novels, from *Herzog* on, sometimes seem to be about little else. One afer another those dreamy Bellow heroes, their heads in the clouds, their minds racing with the most dazzling ideas out of Hegel, Kierkegaard, Rudolf Steiner, stumble while characters with real street smarts steal the laces from their shoes: also their wives, their money, their confidence in themselves as intelligent beings. Bookish ourselves, we have no great problem "relating" (as they say) to these Bellow heroes: Their predicament is in some approximate sense ours—that of squaring ideas with reality, when reality can almost always be counted upon to make a mockery of ideas.

Can there be any doubt that the attraction of intellectuals, of the bookish generally, toward men of action who were also writers has to do with the fact that these men immersed themselves in reality in a way that intellectuals not so secretly wish they could? Leon Trotsky, T. E. Lawrence, André Malraux, writers who were also men of action, exert the attraction they do because in their lives they seem to have made moot the question of whether the pen is mightier than the sword by having wielded both. Without his writing, what was Trotsky but a revolutionary fanatic, a man as ready for butchery as any other of his type? But because he wrote and led the Red Army too he remains a cult figure for the bookish who have felt the stirrings of revolutionary ardor.

Less often but every now and then things work the other way around, and men who have lived by the principle of action, the code of direct experience, take to books or at least yearn for what they deem to be education. Prison libraries, for instance, do a brisk business, and the army used to be filled with sergeants who had two-and-a-half years of credits at the University of Maryland Extension and who, first thing after retirement, were going to finish up that degree. The bookish man for action, the man of action for bookish knowledge—neither party apparently realizes that the grass is just as brown on the other side. Each seeks to complete himself by becoming that for which, by nature, he is unsuited.

Having written that last sentence, I ask myself, do I know what I have just written from experience, or is it something I read somewhere? I suspect I read it, perhaps in the *Journal* of Amiel. But this only illustrates yet another point about the bookish: how for them—that is, for us—the line between experience and reading often becomes blurry. Reading is experience. A biography of any literary person ought to deal at length and in detail with what he read and when, for in some sense, we are what we read.

AT THE same time, we read what we are. Or, as Proust puts it, "In reality every reader is, while he is reading, the reader of his own self." Part of the joke, surely, of the so-called deconstructionist critics who now call for "misreadings" of texts is that a good part of the time most of us misread quite without meaning to. We use books like mirrors, gazing into them only to discover ourselves. We also use them like larders, extracting from them those items we need to satisfy our hungers of the moment. Rereading can be, in this connection, a humility-inducing activity, when, on rereading, one learns that the first time around with a book, one's politics or fantasies or personal anxieties were in fact doing most of the work. Rereading books first read when young, one is inclined to weep for the naïf one not so long ago was. And while at it one might as well weep for the naïf one is likely to discover, if one gets to reread the same book twenty years hence, one is even now.

The one clear advantage of the bookish life over the life of action is that, unlike the latter, the pleasures of the former do not decrease with age. As for the utility of drawing up a list of books, such a list seems almost as useless, and as impossible to follow, as a plan for life. The mystery and the wonder of it is that, somehow or other, the books one needs are the books one finds. But only a very accurate fortune teller could list them for you now and by title.

In Sir Harold Acton's *Nancy Mitford, A Memoir*, Acton quotes Nancy Mitford's father, Lord Redesdale, who was supposed once to have announced, "I have only read one book in my life, and that is *White Fang*. It's so frightfully good I've never bothered to read another." As a preface to this extraordinary announcement, Acton notes of Lord Redesdale: "Apparently his addiction to literature was limited." True addicts may either pity or admire Lord Redesdale. Certainly he could never have been much bothered by Ecclesiastes, in which it is said that of the making of books there is no end, nor by the bone knowledge of the bookish, who know that of the reading of books there is no end either. This, really, is all the bookish know, and it is a lot less than they feel they ought to know.

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Fiction

Self-Seekers

Pearl K. Bell

For the past two hundred years, ever since Rousseau began his *Confessions* with the presumptuous word "I," the expression of the self has been a compulsive preoccupation in Western literature. For some writers, self-discovery must be pursued through memory by reconstructing the autobiographical past, as in Proust's search for lost time, or Joyce's portrait of the artist. Other novelists question the historical and biological givens of religion, color, and class in order to confirm an identity distinct from the group they were born into—as in the Jewish novel, the black novel, the Catholic novel. In some cases the drive toward self-definition is conceived in terms of psychoanalysis, which is valuable for novelists less as a clinical method than as a bridge between the history of the individual and the history of the race, as in Thomas Mann's *Joseph and His Brothers*.

Since the end of the 18th century, the idea of the individual has been the great legacy of liberalism, which maintains that human identity can transcend the fixed characteristics of a group. But to define the genuine rewards of liberalism in this way is also to suggest some of its problematic consequences, in life as well as literature. How does the self-realized individual fulfill the sense of his uniqueness without weakening his ties to such institutions as the family, which impose obligations that restrict the perfect freedom of the self? In countless novels of recent decades, the newly hatched "I" is celebrated as authentic only as he (more often, she) rejects the constraints of collective authority and personal duty, and some feminist writers have gone so far as to equate repression with responsibility of any kind. As liberalism has turned into "liberation," the apostles of self-determination have sought to absolve the individual of all accountability to anything or anyone but himself.

Most novelists still set out on their voyages of self-discovery along the familiar route of autobiography. Yet even when a novelist stretches his vision beyond the magnet of self-regard—William Styron in *Sophie's Choice* or Philip Roth in *The Ghost Writer*, finding in the Holocaust a historical and imaginative reality their own experience cannot provide—his attention, momentarily diverted from himself by the evil specters of history, invariably returns to the self-portrait of the artist goaded by dreams of literary glory.

These ruminations have been prompted by three current novels—Toni Morrison's *Tar Baby*,* Francine du Plessix Gray's *World Without End*,† and D. M. Thomas's *The White Hotel***—each of which deals in a radically different way with the struggle to find one's identity and choose one's destiny. The tone of the first two is intensely personal—not because the fictional story is modeled on the writer's life, but because the feelings and opinions attributed to their invented creatures have the ring of a message. Toni Morrison writes about a black woman whose affirmation of her authentic singularity—"not black—just me"—leads to the denial of her roots within black life and culture. Francine Gray dramatizes the rocky road to self-fulfillment through the self-conscious interplay of the autobiographical past and the fixed certainties of the present. In contrast, *The White Hotel* is free of exhortation, for Thomas has dramatized the quest for self-knowledge within the somber, objective framework of psychoanalysis and history.

The pursuit of the authentic self is the last thing one would expect in a novel by Toni Morrison, for black writers by and large take a dim view of prattle about self-definition. To be troubled and anxious about the reality of the self would have to seem inexplicable or frivolous to the people depicted in most black fiction, including the three novels Toni Morrison published before *Tar Baby*. These men and women already have more reality than they can bear—it is without, not within—and it is not something to be discovered but, if they're lucky, escaped.

Jadine, the heroine of *Tar Baby*, would seem an alien apparition in the black ghetto, which she left behind in early adolescence Now a dazzling model in Paris, she has not only become a huge success in the high life of the *haute couture*, but she has also earned a doctorate in art history from the Sorbonne. Though the most glamorous man in Paris is dying to marry her, she has drawn back, wondering if he craves not what she really is, but the exotic idea of her blackness:

> And if it isn't me he wants, but any black girl who looks like me, talks and acts like me, what will happen when he finds out that I hate ear hoops, that I don't have to straighten my hair, that Mingus puts me to sleep, that sometimes I want to get out of my skin and be only the person in-

Pearl K. Bell, Commentary's *fiction critic, reviewed works by Mark Helprin, Jay Neugeboren, and Nessa Rapoport in our June issue.*

* Knopf, 306 pp., $11.95.
† Simon & Schuster, 314 pp., $12.95.
** Viking, 274 pp., $12.95.

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side—not American—not black—just me?

Such a dilemma, and this kind of deracinated black woman, have until now been absent from Toni Morrison's fictional world. In *The Bluest Eye* and *Sula*, she focused with sorrowful intensity on the isolated black neighborhoods in Midwestern steel towns, and especially on the women, disfigured by helplessness, rage, and obsequious gentility. Neither alienated blacks nor white persons of any kind appear in *Song of Solomon*, a more ambitious tale that made vivid use of myth and the supernatural in recounting the pilgrimage of Milkman Dead, who goes South in search of buried treasure, only to learn that the real treasure is the knowledge he gains about his vanished slave ancestors.

THE life depicted in Toni Morrison's earlier novels drew its strength from her flawless recollection of a cherished and painful past. *Tar Baby* is set not on the writer's native ground but on a French island in the Caribbean where she, too, is only a tourist, and the novel seems to have been designed more as a vehicle for bitter judgments than as a reflective rendering of memory. This may account for its disjointed tone, its florid language, and the incongruity of its parts: a lush tropic locale; a gorgeously romantic and doomed love story; a melodramatic family scandal; and the harsh indictment of white civilization that washes over it all.

Tar Baby introduces white characters for the first time—Valerian Street, the wealthy candy manufacturer who paid for Jadine's education, and his wife Margaret, a former Miss Maine with a terrible secret. Valerian has built a sumptuous house on the Isle des Chevaliers, and he can sometimes behave like a feudal baron toward Jadine's aunt and uncle, his faithful retainers. But he is also self-mocking, quirky, and generous to a fault—a tyrant with a heart of tarnished gold—and Miss Morrison's portrait of the old man shuttles so erratically between fondness and outrage that he is hard to place in her moral scheme.

When *Newsweek* devoted its cover to Toni Morrison last spring, the accompanying story hailed *Tar Baby* as "a truly public novel about the condition of society, examining the relations between blacks and whites, men and women, civilization and nature circa 1981." Unhappily, this is cover-story hype. Except for brief interludes in New York and rural Florida, the action is confined to Valerian's Caribbean fastness, where he hopes to end his days in isolated splendor; the social and racial actuality of the island, as Miss Morrison portrays it, does not have enough symbolic breadth or substance to make it the microcosm of white civilization she seems to have had in mind.

THE racial and cultural tensions in *Tar Baby* are played out mainly in the fiery love affair between Jadine and a black fugitive called Son, who opens the can of worms at the heart of Valerian's household, and by implication at the heart of white society as well. In an unrelenting tirade which summons up memories of the black-power assaults on white America in the 60's and which puts no distance between character and author, Son pours out his wrath on the white barbarians who

> had not the dignity of wild animals who did not eat where they defecated but they could defecate over a whole people and come there to live and defecate some more by tearing up the land and that is why they loved property so, because they had killed it soiled it . . . and they loved more than anything the places where they shit. Would fight and kill to own the cesspools they made, and although they called it architecture it was in fact elaborately built toilets . . . surrounded with and by business and enterprise in order to have something to do in between defecations since waste was the order of the day and the ordering principle of the universe. . . . That was the sole lesson of their world: how to make waste . . . and how to despise the culture that lived in cloth houses, and shit on the ground far away from where they ate.

Miss Morrison seems to have envisioned Son as a noble savage, a beautiful primitive blessed with perfect pitch for the natural order of things. It soon becomes clear that she has little sympathy with Jadine's longing to get out of her black skin and be "only the person inside," for such dreams of self-realization are an offense against the race and herself. "Culture-bearing black woman," Miss Morrison demands, "whose culture are you bearing?" Only a man like Son, in sure possession of ancestral values, can redeem Jadine, who has sacrificed her tribal soul to "white" sophistication and learning. Son's very name implies that the continuity of the black people, as Miss Morrison sees it, can survive only by resisting every white encroachment on its wholeness.

THOUGH Miss Morrison tries to dramatize the lovers' irreconcilable views, one senses a good deal of ambivalence and evasiveness beneath her uncompromising racial severity, and this may explain the pointless extravagance of her style in *Tar Baby*, which leans heavily on the pathetic fallacy. Rivers are "grieving and brokenhearted," butterflies peek through windows "to see for themselves," and avocado trees have ears. After a while the incessant anthropomorphizing of nature becomes grotesque. And when ideology insinuates itself into the metaphors, Miss Morrison is merely notional: in New York the subways mutilated with graffiti are "blazing jewels . . . shining with the recognizable artifacts of childhood: fantasy, magic, ego, energy, humor, and paint." The IRT as Disneyland.

Even the title of *Tar Baby* contributes to the underlying confusion of Miss Morrison's story, her failure to consider the way a metaphor can mislead. In the Uncle Remus story, a tar baby is the black doll a white farmer puts into the cabbage patch to trap the thieving rabbit. As Son hurls the tale at his lover's head in their final quarrel, Valerian becomes the white man who made tar-baby Jadine—but how, then, does Son stand for the rabbit who outsmarts the farmer and runs away? Why does he desperately try to find Jadine after *she* runs back to Paris? None of this makes much sense, and

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perhaps Miss Morrison had nothing more allusive in mind than the blackness and stickiness of tar, which will cling to Jadine no matter how completely she imagines herself accepted in the white world. It is a depressing judgment, but *Tar Baby* does not convince us that it must be true.

THE high-flown prose of Francine du Plessix Gray's *World Without End* can be as tumid as Toni Morrison's, but Mrs. Gray's intentions are not in the least ambiguous. Ostensibly the novel is an exploration of friendship, but at bottom it is the familiar story of self-realization, divided among three stylish friends driven by similar obsessions. Edmund, Claire, and Sophie have been friends and sometime lovers for thirty years, and in 1975, when they turn forty-five, they decide to take an Intourist trip through Russia in order to "learn how to live the last third of their lives," and to reach in the course of the journey what Edmund all too characteristically describes as "that ethereal summit of candor which only friendship can offer."

Why Russia? The reasons for the choice are never made entirely clear, but Russia is the ancestral homeland Edmund has never seen. A wartime refugee, he grew up among impoverished White Russians in New York, abandoned a promising career as a realistic painter when Abstract Expressionism won the day, and is now a professor of art history at Berkeley. Sophie, the clever and voluptuous daughter of a Jewish impresario, has become a famous television-news broadcaster. Claire, a lean and chilly Wasp aristocrat, is an indefatigable do-gooder and ban-the-bomb marcher who briefly abandoned husband and child to become an Anglican nun, but has now returned to less stringent forms of self-redemption.

As the handsome and ferociously highbrow travelers bounce in their Intourist bus from Tbilisi to Kiev, and on to Leningrad and Moscow, the narrative shunts back and forth between the Russian present, thick with voluble banalities about art, reality, and truth, and the past ecstasies and sorrows the friends have shared in Nantucket, Berkeley, New York, and the more decorative corners of Europe. No matter where they are or what their age, Edmund, Claire, and Sophie talk in elegantly vaporous paragraphs, though they never give up their preppy fondness for whimsical nicknames: Claire is Pebble, Edmund is Eddem, and so on.

Just as Toni Morrison's inflated imagery does not conceal the ambivalence of her fundamental judgments, Francine Gray's sententious dialogue about love and death and self-fulfillment does not blind us to the poverty of thought in what seems to have been conceived as a novel of ideas. Ideas don't stand a chance against such "spontaneous" conversational offerings as Claire's "It took me some traumatic years to learn that . . . you and Edmund were the only ones whose stubbornness was great enough to claim me, whose voices were tenacious enough to break through my solitude . . . you may have been my humanity." And then there is Edmund's pillow talk, just after he has made love to Sophie: "I think most artists are narcissists, sweetheart, and even though I may never paint again I'll always remain an artist, I'll nurture my narcissism with utmost solicitude, water it, prune it, give it exotic plant care." Even a simple admission of selfishness turns into an aria.

World Without End is not a novel of ideas, it is an adolescent daydream, an orgy of pseudo-intellectual posturing, a midnight bull session in a college dorm. Now and then there is a faint suggestion that Francine Gray has satiric designs on her nattering trio, but she loves them all too much to mock what the Intourist guide, infected by their idiom, calls their "calisthenics of the soul." Nor is this a novel about friendship, since Edmund, Claire, and Sophie, at forty-five no less than at fifteen, are too self-absorbed to be capable of the responsive attention that friendship demands. Monsters of consciousness, they are conscious of nothing but themselves.

IN *The White Hotel*, the British poet and novelist D. M. Thomas demonstrates his literary virtuosity without lapsing into the mannered convolutions of Toni Morrison or Francine du Plessix Gray. Though Thomas himself stands outside the novel, and scrupulously excludes his own emotions from the story, the one thing *The White Hotel* has in common with the two American novels is the theme of self-discovery. But Thomas has a genuinely intellectual imagination, and has had the audacious idea of dramatizing the exigencies of the self not merely in the context of psychoanalysis, but within the history of psychoanalysis. To carry out this scheme with the immediacy a novel must convey, Thomas has boldly appropriated the voice, personality, and therapeutic method of the genius who revolutionized the modern conception of the self—Sigmund Freud.

In a brief prologue, Thomas invents an exchange of letters between Freud and his colleagues Sandor Ferenczi and Hanns Sachs which brilliantly imitates Freud's characteristic tone of Olympian confidence and ironic authority. In explaining that the "pornographic" document he is sending them was written by a young woman he treated for hysteria, Freud prepares the way for Thomas's fiction, which begins with the document itself—a convulsive fantasy disgorged from the unconscious mind of an as yet nameless patient.

In these extraordinarily erotic and violent imaginings, a young woman travels with one of Freud's sons to a white hotel in the Alps where their savage coupling is accompanied by a series of catastrophes—flood, fire, a falling cable car, a landslide. Dozens of guests die horribly while the rest, including the lovers, remain remarkably unperturbed by the demonic invasions of their holiday pastoral, and go on with their revels as though nothing had happened. But the concatenations of sex and death grow more and more frenzied and bizarre in the course of the fantasy, which Freud will later describe as "an erogenous flood, an inundation of the irrational and libidinous."

The following section consists of still another document, the case history that Thomas's Freud writes after the analysis comes to an end.

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As we read Freud's account of his successful treatment, in 1919, of Lisa Erdman, a half-Jewish opera singer whose hysteria took the form of debilitating pain, we realize that the seemingly dislocated structure of Thomas's novel closely follows the successive stages of psychoanalytic therapy. Like many works of fiction, Thomas's begins with a mystery, the symptoms of neurosis. This is followed by the patient's further contribution to the mystery, the surrealistic inventions of the unconscious in her dreamlike fantasy. And the mystery is gradually cleared up as the analyst deciphers the symbolic code, and enables his patient to gain self-knowledge. As Steven Marcus has written in his essay on Freud's case history of "Dora," at the end of psychoanalytic treatment the patient "has come into possession of [his] own story. . . . It is a story, or a fiction, not only because it has a narrative structure, but also because the narrative account has been rendered in language, in conscious speech, and no longer exists in the deformed language of symptoms, the untranslated speech of the body."

As D. M. Thomas's Freud unravels the tangled enigmas of Lisa Erdman's illness in his case history, he reveals how he broke through her self-protective deceptions and unriddled the crucial symbol of the white hotel. It is the womb of his patient's mother, who died in a hotel fire, in the arms of her clandestine lover, when her daughter was barely five. Since she was never told the truth about her mother's disappearance, Lisa has never ceased longing, though she is now almost thirty, for that body which is, in Freud's words, "a place without sin, without our load of remorse . . . the auto-erotic paradise, the map of our first country of love." But the haze of scandal surrounding her mother's terrible death also turns the fantasized white hotel into a charnelhouse. In the case history, Freud picks up this thread of morbidity and tells us that the analysis of Lisa Erdman strengthened his theoretical conviction that there is "a *universal* struggle between the life instinct and the death instinct" —the famous Janus-head of Eros and Thanatos. But her symptoms disappear, and when the analysis comes to an end, Freud writes: "I told her I thought she was cured of everything but life, so to speak. She took away with her a reasonable prospect of survival." With Freud's guidance, Lisa Erdman has "come into possession of her own story."

This is far from the whole story, as we soon learn, for Thomas is writing a novel, not a text circumscribed by reality. Freud's case history of "Anna G.," as he calls Lisa, is only a chapter in this novel, and when, in the remaining sections of *The White Hotel*, Thomas becomes a conventionally omniscient narrator, we begin to understand the premonitory design of the book, as case history conjoins with history to flout Freud's stoic prophecy about Lisa's future.

Some years after the analysis, she marries a Russian-Jewish opera star, a widower with a small son, and settles in Kiev. Though happy in her new life, she is often stricken by terrible forebodings, an ominous certainty that "*somewhere*—at that very moment—someone was inflicting the worst possible horror on another human being." These forebodings are realized in 1941, when the Nazis occupy Kiev. Along with thousands of other Jews, Lisa and her stepson are herded into the ravine at Babi Yar, and a German bayonet brings the story of her life to an end in a gruesome parody of sex.

D. M. Thomas is not the first novelist to explore the paradoxical interweavings of love and death, though he has given them powerfully original expression in *The White Hotel*. The classic 20th-century novel about the kinship of Eros and Thanatos is of course *The Magic Mountain*, and for all the important differences between Thomas Mann's masterpiece and D. M. Thomas's book, the parallels that suggest themselves are intriguing.

Both writers explore the ways in which neurosis and acute spiritual malaise are literally "bodied forth" as physical illness. Hans Castorp and Lisa Erdman appear at first to be rather ordinary persons, but both are dangerously susceptible to the pathological promptings of their emotional ignorance, and must be "educated" into a state of health. Castorp's infatuation with the seductive Clavdia, and Lisa's pornographic fantasy of the white hotel, are forms of surrender to the demonic, but they are necessary steps in the journey from neurotic darkness to the light of self-knowledge. Within their unconscious minds, the obsession with death claws at their will to live, and in the *Walpurgisnacht* chapter of *The Magic Mountain*, Castorp subverts Freud's theory of Eros and Thanatos into the malignant affirmation that "the body, love, death, they are one and the same." But the most arresting resemblance between the two novels has to do with the insolence of history, as indifferent to Castorp's triumph over illness as it will prove years later to Lisa's. Castorp dies in battle during the first war, and Lisa is slaughtered in the second.

And yet, for all its bold originality and its ingenious borrowings from Sigmund Freud, D. M. Thomas's novel does seem thin beside the profound monumentality of *The Magic Mountain*. The balanced abundance of philosophical speculation, erudition, and scrupulously observed human behavior in Thomas Mann's capacious narrative invests his characters with a representative gravity that Lisa Erdman does not attain. Though she contributes unwittingly to Freud's theory of the death instinct, she remains in life untouched by political and cultural forces, a little too ordinary to be more than a victim. But Hans Castorp, caught in the fevered ideological crossfire between Settembrini and Naphtha, is transfigured despite himself. It was nothing less than "the sick mind of Europe" that Thomas Mann sought to lay bare in *The Magic Mountain*, but not even the great presence of Sigmund Freud bestows a similar power of historical revelation upon *The White Hotel*.

The discrepancy between the two literary sensibilities is especially clear in the coda the British novelist has chosen to close his story. All the dead have arrived in a desert settlement called Palestine, where every-

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one is welcomed, parents and children are reunited in tender forgiveness, and neutered cats have kittens. Since suffering still exists in this afterlife, it is purgatory, not paradise—but Lisa Erdman, embracing her long-lost mother, is convinced that "wherever there is love of *any* kind, there is hope of salvation."

The fantasy of resurrection is intended, one would guess, to bring Lisa's story full circle, back to the infantile pleasures of the white hotel, but without its charred bodies. In this dream of immortality, Thomas cunningly repeats some of the images in the neurotic outpouring that began Lisa's story, but by now the counterpoint is too contrived. It is inconceivable that the ironic mind of Thomas Mann would have summoned up the hopeful vision of eternity to suggest, as D. M. Thomas does, that the human imagination can outlive the betrayals of evil. What Mann understood, long before Hitler, was that the private pathology of everyday life is always devoured by the pathological reality of history.

Movies

Kid Stuff

Richard Grenier

IN THE summer of 1981 American movies are enjoying flush times. The country is being bombarded with a series of blockbuster movies which, if thunderous opening weeks are any guide, seem destined to save the American cinema. Some of the heavy thinkers among the daily and weekly film reviewers have come to bemoan the trivialization of movie "summer fare," one critic summing it up as a choice between "action and yuks." But counting by category among what seem at the moment to be shaping up as the season's Big Ten, I come to a quite different tally: Action: two. Comedy: three. Juvenile: five.

I think no one will quarrel with my placing the new James Bond movie, *For Your Eyes Only*,* and Burt Reynolds's *Cannonball Run* in the "action" category, although there is some overlapping among the genres. Roger Moore, in addition to playing Bond, teams up with Reynolds in *Cannonball* to play a corset manufacturer named Seymour Goldfarb (complete with the celebrated Yiddish actress Molly Picon as his mother) who zooms around in his Aston Martin in a tuxedo hoping people will take him for Roger Moore. Also featured are Dean Martin and Sammy Davis, Jr., as drunken priests. Critics have been wringing their hands over such truly unspeakable bad taste, but, if $12 million on an opening weekend means anything, it seems to be the kind of bad taste that the American people want.

The comedies, meanwhile, are clearly comedies: the new Cheech and Chong movie, *Nice Dreams* (asked if success had changed him, Chong answered, "Yeah. I'm better looking"), and Bill Murray's startling *Stripes*. A poor third in this group is Mel Brooks's *History of the World (Part I)*. In the Last Judgment rendered at the box office, the public finds Brooks's musical num-

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* I have been admonished by *Newsweek* and the Philadelphia *Inquirer* for chiding the Bond series "for going soft on the Communist threat" ("Updating James Bond," June). Actually, I anticipated in that piece that the new Bond movie, which I had not yet seen, would abandon the Western-Soviet alliance and revive the notion of the Soviet Union as an antagonistic power. Having seen the film now, I can report that it looks as if it were scripted by Secretary of State Alexander Haig. It is crawling with Cuban and East German hit men, and, via these and Western agents, the KGB attempts to secure a device capable of destroying Britain in a nuclear holocaust. Although these details seem strangely to have escaped the attention of *Newsweek* and the *Inquirer*, as far as Bond is concerned, the "Communist threat," it would appear, is definitely back.

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bers "Jews in Space" and "Torquemada Tortures the Jews," only one-third as funny as Roger Moore playing Seymour Goldfarb.

BUT the largest and most intriguing of all these categories is the juvenile, and within it the prototypical entry is *Raiders of the Lost Ark*.

In describing the genesis of this movie, its author-producer George Lucas has said, "With both *Star Wars* and *Raiders* I started out by asking myself, 'Gee, when I was a kid, what did I really like?'" One of the things he really liked, it turns out, was old-time serials, the thrill-a-minute Saturday-matinée specials which so entranced juvenile movie audiences in the 30's and 40's and which Lucas later adored during their second coming in the 50's in what *Variety* calls the "kid-vid" hours of television programming. He liked their derring-do, the unbeatable courage of their heroes. "I took that character and put him in outer space and it worked just fine," said Lucas (meaning in *Star Wars*).

But Lucas also liked the 30's themselves, or at least he liked 30's movies, and he decided his next film would be set in his character's "true" period. "Practically every movie star of the 30's has one movie like this," Lucas said, "be it Alan Ladd or Clark Gable or whoever—playing a soldier of fortune in a leather jacket and that kind of hat [a felt snap-brim]. That's a favorite period of mine." It has been suggested by some critics that *Raiders of the Lost Ark* is an homage to the "glorious days of the B-picture" (of which term more later). Another critic has suggested that the true archetype of *Raiders* would be a film like the Howard Hawks-Cary Grant *Only Angels Have Wings* (movies with Cary Grant, Clark Gable, or Alan Ladd, be it said in passing, were not B- but A-pictures). But anyone who has seen *Only Angels Have Wings* from beginning to end knows just how selective Lucas's view of 30's movies is, and just how much he has chosen to leave out: the slow lip-reader-style plotting, insipid characterization, saccharine love scenes, maudlin climaxes, and the humiliating but unmistakable assumption on the part of the movie-makers that the audience was so ignorant it would take this highly artificial pulp-fiction adventure tale as a realistic portrayal of life.

There is none of this in *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. There is not one foot of the film that asks an adult viewer to believe it could possibly take place at any time, at any place, anywhere in the world. As stated quite firmly by Lucas (who is a far shrewder analyst of the essential ingredients of his films than most movie critics), *Raiders* is inspired not by B-movies but by an even "lower" art form, those old serials—which is to say a scrupulously unrealistic medium designed exclusively for juveniles. Once again, George Lucas, who lives to an appreciable degree in the world of the child (he certainly has childlike daydreams), has made—with a strong assist from Steven Spielberg, the director—the movie he wanted to see himself.

I have described in an earlier article* how Lucas, in conceiving *Star Wars*, set out modestly and unpretentiously to make a movie "for twelve-year-olds" (not sixteen, not fourteen, but twelve), with the hope that, if successful, it could be spun out into a modern children's potboiler serial, freeing him financially to make more interesting, experimental movies. *Star Wars*' success among the adult American population left him somewhat dumbfounded. By now, however, I suspect he has adjusted his planning to retain all these overage twelve-year-olds in his audience, principally by turning out a stylish, high-gloss product. It is not everyone who can take a shabby children's-story formula and thrill with delight millions of sensible adults, giving them the matinée serial of their dreamy recollections, the one that never was. It's a knack.

Raiders is financed and distributed by Paramount Pictures, and in the film's opening shot the great white mountain in the Paramount logo fades into a great purple Andean mountain of exactly the same shape, just before the old-style legend "SOUTH AMERICA, 1936" appears on the screen. The mountain trick earns a light giggle from the audience, but it is a very deft touch. *Raiders of the Lost Ark* is not a parody. It is not a spoof. It is not even an affectionate spoof. But there is just the faintest whiff of camp in the air, which tells the audience, in the opening shot, that the story is not to be taken seriously. It conveys very effectively the idea, "Let's all be kids again." And lo, it is done.

We are in a clearing deep in the jungle. Indiana Jones (Harrison Ford), a swashbuckling archeologist (yes), has been leading a team of Amazonian Indians for weeks through the uncharted green maze of the tropical rain forest. Wearing his battered brown felt hat and leather jacket, carrying his lethal bullwhip, he is handsome, rugged-looking, confident. His stubby, sweat-streaked face bears a look of gratification because he has finally reached the entrance to an ancient Indian temple containing the golden idol once worshipped by an Indian tribe, which, although it has disappeared centuries ago, left its idol better protected than the gold in the fifth sub-basement of the Federal Reserve building in lower Manhattan.

A treacherous, greedy Indian guide suddenly turns a pistol on Indy, but a lightning lash of Indy's bullwhip snaps the pistol out of his hand and the guide flees into the jungle. And now for the temple. A twisting tunnel, festoons of cobwebs, tarantulas scurrying underfoot. Then a scream!—as a second guide almost falls into a bottomless moat. Indy saves him and with his trusty bullwhip swings them to the other side. And now they see, dazzlingly spotlit at the end of the tunnel, the awesome idol, all blazing gold.

Indy senses that these pre-Columbian Indians had their own anti-burglary devices every bit as sophisticated as our own high-technology bank protection systems, and, arriving at the chamber containing the idol, he cautiously taps the floor tiles—which produces a rush of air and a whistling sound as a thousand deadly darts fly out from tiny

* "Celebrating Defeat," COMMENTARY, August 1980.

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holes in the wall! They were aimed to kill any intruder but Indy has outfoxed them. Treading only on "safe" tiles, Indy, with extreme care, lifts the golden idol from its pedestal as he simultaneously replaces it with a dirt-filled pouch—for the Indians had obviously also doped out the kind of weight-sensitive triggering mechanisms that protect precious objets d'art in our best-equipped modern museums. The coveted treasure is at last in his hands.

Has Indy gotten away with it? But no! Slowly an ominous rumbling begins behind the chamber walls, growing louder by the second, and the whole temple begins to shake. Clutching the idol, Indy races for the exit! To our horror, on the far side of the moat, we see a great stone wall descending, which will seal Indy and the guide forever in this underground tomb. The guide swings across the moat first with Indy's bullwhip. "Throw me the idol and I'll throw you back your whip," he cries as the wall descends relentlessly. Indy tosses over the idol, at which the guide drops the whip to the ground and sneers, *"Adios, amigo,"* ducking under the descending wall. Betrayed again!

Indy hurls himself desperately across the moat, almost falling into the bottomless depths but, clutching, clawing, manages to pull himself up and roll under the terrifying wall with not an inch to spare, barely a split second before it thuds into place for eternity. The audience gasps as Indy looks up and sees his guide dead, hideously impaled on long spikes that have sprung out of the wall, the ancient Indians' vengeance on the desecraters of their god's temple. *"Adios, amigo,"* repeats Indy sardonically, recovering the golden treasure, and he now has only to escape being crushed by a huge thundering, rolling boulder (60 feet of film), be chased through the jungle, then out in open country, up hill, down dale, with thirty bloodthirsty, spear-wielding Indians after him, throw himself off a high cliff, be rescued by a seaplane waiting for him in the river below . . . and this isn't the movie yet, it's just the prologue.

"When I first read the screenplay, I almost wept," said Steven Spielberg, the director, meaning how much work it all represented, how many complicated shots. And it couldn't come out looking tacky. It had to come out *class*.

THE main plot of *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, all shot in this same thrill-a-minute, delirious-kiddy, peanut-heaven style, concerns Indiana Jones's quest for nothing less than the Ark of the Covenant in which Moses brought down the Decalogue from Mount Sinai, the covenant of Jehovah with the Hebrew people. We are told that Hitler (for, believe it or not, there was a Hitler) was "obsessed with the occult," and having learned from Jewish lore that an army that marches behind the Ark of the Covenant is invincible, has set his imposing will on finding it in the Egyptian desert. In case the reader thinks that this mission might carry something of the feeling of a quest for a fragment of the true cross, I can assure him that the film has not the slightest shred of religious feeling, any more than it has any recognizable anti-Nazi feeling when the Germans appear. The Nazis, it goes without saying, are unmistakable baddies. They leer and make mean faces and giggle when they torture you. But if the viewer expects the faintest reflection of Brownshirts in the streets, or Auschwitz, or the SS in Poland, he will be disappointed. These are dummy Nazis, as King Kong is a dummy gorilla. Does King Kong sincerely love Fay Wray?

From the director's point of view, *Raiders'* story is exhausting. There are bombings and assassination attempts in Cairo, a kidnapping and threats of horrible torture, a wild chase through the desert with a lone American horseman against German military vehicles (guess who wins?), poisoned darts, poisoned dates, exploding trucks, imprisonment in the "Well of Souls" amid thousands of poisonous asps and cobras, a German escape with the Ark by submarine, with Indy Jones apparently hanging onto the outside of the conning tower while the sub proceeds some hundreds of miles submerged to a previously unrevealed German submarine pen in the Aegean. The Nazis, in the film's super-climax, finally open the golden, sacred Ark, and the Lord, wroth, wreaks vengeance on these villains. Actually, when the Lord goes into action He produces effects suspiciously like those produced by extraterrestrials in *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, which Steven Spielberg also directed.

MY SUMMARY of the high points may make *Raiders of the Lost Ark* seem like a parody, but despite a number of humorous moments here and there, it is not. *Dracula*, particularly in the Broadway version, was a parody. The James Bond series has elements of parody, in that audiences laugh at the very impossibility of Bond's feats. But *Star Wars* was not a parody of a science-fiction movie, and *Raiders of the Lost Ark* is not a parody of a kid's movie. It is a kid's movie.

Still, faithful as *Raiders* is to its sources, George Lucas would not want to be regarded as socially irresponsible, and so he has calculatingly introduced deliberate anachronisms in the ever-so-faintly predictable areas of feminism and race.

Indy Jones has a female companion, Marion (Karen Allen), and Marion punches with both hands and has a mean left hook—a prize-ring skill not often found in 30's heroines. She is the daughter of a celebrated archeologist. Indy finds her again running a native gin mill in Nepal, and she doesn't even have any help; she cleans the place up herself. (Gin mill? Nepal? Archeologist's daughter? Ask not how or why.) In her opening scene, Marion is engaged in a drinking match with a Sherpa the size of a Sumo wrestler, glass for glass, slug for slug, and drinks him into unconsciousness. I pointed out in my earlier article the uncommon aggressivity of Princess Leia in Lucas's *Star Wars* series, wondering whether this represented Lucas's personal taste in women, his sense of the *Zeitgeist*, or merely his response to the demands of Mrs. Lucas. In any event, this sort of thing has evidently become a fixture of his work, and in future films he may have women besting men at arm wrestling, slugging it out in barroom donnybrooks, and perhaps even urinating against walls. Nothing is too good for women.

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Raiders' handling of race is more ambiguous. Thirties movies were unquestionably racist, often quite nastily so, and those which showed white adventurers out among the world's lesser breeds on other continents were among the most racist of the lot. With *Raiders* so impregnated with its source material, the built-in racism was apparently impossible to root out entirely. A white man is still worth a hundred greasers in a fight, for example, and treacherous or cowardly non-whites hold the screen as of old. But Lucas tries to make it up by offering some sops. When Indy Jones needs to find a trustworthy sea captain to take him across the Mediterranean, he is presented to a handsome black in naval uniform. One look at his smiling face and Indy knows he can trust him; nor does the black man betray his trust. This no doubt is to make up for all the treacherous greasers.

So MANY critics have used the expression B-movie in discussing *Raiders of the Lost Ark,* and the expression is now subject to such bizarre misuse among the general population, that a word is perhaps necessary as to its meaning. B-movie is a historical term dating from the age of the old studio system, and above all from the age of the double feature—which is to say, B-movies ceased to be made decades ago, going out at about the same time as celluloid, another word which has had a peculiar afterlife (for well over a quarter-century, films have been made on tri-acetate). When you went to see your Lana Turner, or Robert Taylor, or Betty Grable movie, no matter how bad or cliché-ridden, that was an A-picture. The movie thrown in free on the double feature, and which you might not have crossed the street to see otherwise, was the B-picture. The big Hollywood studios, which owned huge chains of movie houses in the glory days, made two sorts of films for these self-contained circuits: their top-of-the-line product with leading stars, copious budgets, on which all their publicity was lavished; and movies with second-rank stars and restricted budgets for the people who didn't care much what they saw after the main film was over so long as it moved and made noises. The "second-feature" audience (the term was synonymous with B-movie) had much in common with today's television audience—indeed, the creation of one brought about the disappearance of the other. The closest modern approximation of a B-picture is perhaps a television Movie of the Week, always made for a small fraction of the cost of a film intended for theatrical release.

But quite early on, when the word drifted out that Hollywood made two kinds of films, an A-series and a B-series, the term B-movie somehow caught the fancy of the public, which formed the firm notion that the critical distinction was one of quality.* There was disdainful talk for a time of (nonexistent) C-movie and Z-movies. Once the second feature was truly defunct, the term B-movie seemed to take on a life of its own, and many people now appear to feel it means something like what was at one time called a "good-bad" movie, frequently a genre movie: Western, horror, detective, mystery, etc. I have been informed in very self-assured tones that films with absolutely colossal budgets starring Burt Reynolds or Clint Eastwood are B-movies—although I have never heard this in Hollywood, where the term, now used only figuratively, always retains the essence of its original meaning: low cost, an unpretentious "cheapie."

Thus, when Steven Spielberg says of *Raiders of the Lost Ark,* "The crew wanted an A-picture. I just wanted a B-plus," he is speaking about time available, money, resources. On his disastrous *1941,* nothing was too big, too elaborate. Spielberg averaged twenty "takes" per shot and production costs went through the roof. On *Raiders,* Lucas kept him on a very tight leash. The production was minutely planned, by both men. This time Spielberg averaged *four* takes per shot and brought the picture in twelve days ahead of schedule. After the horrors of *1941,* Spielberg was induced not to "shoot for a masterpiece" and to give up what he calls "that remarkable veneer that only I and this year's graduating class at USC film school and Stanley Kubrick would have noticed"—and which would have cost another $10 million. As for the artistic model for *Raiders,* as I have already explained, it was not the 30's A-pictures, or B-pictures, but junk children's serials. Says Spielberg, "I brought the crew down to my pulp-eye level."

As may be inferred from this and earlier passages, establishing a single "author" for *Raiders of the Lost Ark*—as for many other films—is a quite impossible task. The motion-picture art is said, with some justice, to be a "director's medium," and *Raiders* was shot by a very famous and very talented director named Steven Spielberg. But the film was under Lucas's control at every stage. He had the original idea; he is co-author of the story; he is an executive producer; the special effects were done by his company; uncredited, he supervised the film's entire editing; he had the celebrated "final cut." Nothing is on the screen that Lucas did not want there. On balance, and without wishing to minimize Spielberg's contribution or do him an injustice, *Raiders* seems to be more like a Lucas movie than a Spielberg movie. In an attempt to mollify all parties (for I understand there is already bitterness), I would call it "the famous Lucas-Spielberg *Raiders of the Lost Ark.*"

IN ANY CASE, something strange is happening in American movies. While the average age of the American population is growing steadily older, American movie audiences seem to be growing steadily younger. Some years ago the mean age of the U.S. moviegoer was twenty-five, but judging by the content of the films, this appears to be dropping every year. Are children being given more pocket money, more independence? Are adults more isolated,

* Readers whose notions of Hollywood have been formed by Nathanael West's brilliant *The Day of the Locust* might be interested to learn that West, who earned his living as a Hollywood screenwriter, worked entirely on B-pictures. His superiors thought he showed promise, however, feeling, if he proved his worth, that he might eventually be promoted to A-pictures.

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venturing forth less? Is some large social change afoot?

My own sense of the situation is the the new moviegoer might not be quite as youthful as is sometimes assumed. The picture has been distorted in recent years by the "repeaters" in the youthful age group: an adolescent who sees *Star Wars* eight times is counted as eight people. But when George Lucas's *The Empire Strikes Back* opened last year, I had occasion to pass and repass, several times a day, the huge lines waiting to see the film in Westwood, the new entertainment center for the affluent suburbs of Los Angeles stretching westward to the Pacific along the Wilshire Corridor. I was curious to see all those fervid adolescents I'd been hearing about, and was somewhat dismayed to note that the average customer age was something like thirty. What I am suggesting is that large numbers of adults are now going to see children's pictures.

This summer their tastes are being gratified in a big way. Aside from *Raiders*, there is, for example, the sequel to *Superman I*. *Superman II* marks a sharp departure from *Superman I*, which was at least half spoof, drawing much of its style from the original Broadway show—and largely shaped by the same two writers, David Newman and Robert Benton. In the first *Superman*, Clark Kent's mortal antagonist is the comic book's Lex Luthor (Gene Hackman), and most of the action takes place not too far from the *Daily Planet*. But in the sequel, which may prove even more successful, the droll Luthor is demoted to a subsidiary role, Clark Kent's great enemy becomes General Zod from the planet Krypton, and the extraterrestrials come to the fore with a vengeance. *Superman*, in a word, has been Star-Warized.

Then there is *Clash of the Titans*, a child's version of Greek mythology. And *Dragonslayer*, featuring a teenage hero in a save-the-damsel fairy tale. Perhaps the most sophisticated of this juvenile group, paradoxically enough, is the new muppet movie, *The Great Muppet Caper*, whose dialogue, if not quite up to the Lewis Carroll level, is really rather witty.

But there is no doubt in my mind: a new escapism is upon us. The culture is not homogeneous, of course, and there are numerous other strands, some of them rather more apparent in winter than in summer. But anxieties of one sort or another seem to be taking their toll.

The country's first great wave of escapist movies was produced by the Great Depression and an economy of real material scarcity. Film after film had as its central core a daydream about how nice it would be to be rich, to travel, to live in a penthouse in Manhattan, to wear evening clothes, to go to nightclubs where cigarette girls wore short, bouffant skirts. All these wonders were displayed to an audience which the producers confidently assumed knew nothing of the things portrayed, had never experienced them in any way.

This kind of "upscale" economic daydreaming seems to be out. It is always somewhat misleading to compare filmgoers of today with those of a generation ago because the modern equivalent of the old Hollywood mass audience now sticks largely to television, where indeed it does find a certain amount of upscale daydreaming. But even here there is nothing to compare with the years of the Great Depression. And search as I will in recent movie production I find almost no films of the old wouldn't-it-be-nice-to-be-a-millionaire sort. Where is the old success story, once one of Hollywood's most reliable staples? For it was always all right to start out poor in a movie, provided you made it to the top. It is as if American film audiences were sated, in a way, anxious about holding on to what they've got, but dreaming no dreams of further dazzling advances.

During the heyday of the counterculture there were great numbers of movies of the "downscale" daydreaming variety, evoking the happiness of a simpler, more carefree, less materialistic life. There might still be a trace of this in the recent Jack Nicholson-Bob Rafelson *The Postman Always Rings Twice*, which depicts with some delectation a grungy lower depths where the sex, at least, is better. But this downscale style, too, has waned in its turn.

They don't want to go up, they don't want to go down. Where can you take them where they want to go? The answer seems to be: *backward*. Escape into the world of the child. Return to the warm, rosy imaginings of life when the world was new. George Lucas has some sort of genius for this. Steven Spielberg has his moments. And it is spreading. Explain the phenomenon as you will, millions of adults are rushing to spiffy children's movies. It's the New Puerility.

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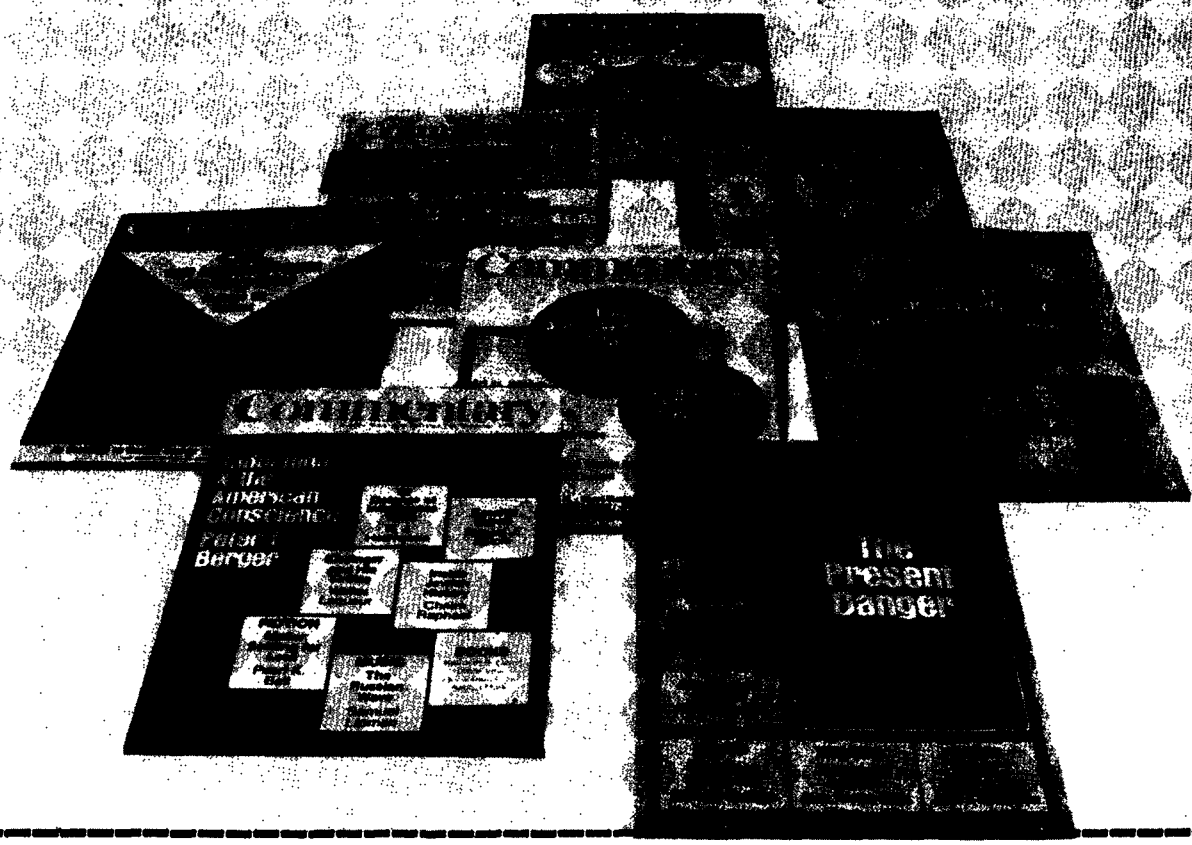

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Books in Review

Of Arms & Men

NATIONAL DEFENSE. By JAMES FALLOWS. *Random House. 204 pp. $12.95.*

Reviewed by ELIOT A. COHEN

IT SEEMS strange but is undeniably true that now, less than a decade after Vietnam, responsible American political observers agree that our military forces require strengthening. Although most conclude that this means higher defense spending, a small but growing group now argues that how much we spend on defense is far less important than how it is spent: indeed, this group claims, increased spending will *hurt* defense if the Pentagon continues to waste money. Among professional politicians this view is most articulately expressed by Senator Gary Hart; among journalists it has found an effective spokesman in James Fallows.

Fallows most recently made a name for himself by writing two acid portraits of President Carter for the *Atlantic* shortly after he left the Carter staff, where he had served as speechwriter. His new book is "designed to give the general reader better ways of thinking about defense." It is a clear and forceful exposition of the new school of thinking about defense, but one which also reveals the profound flaws of this approach.

The core of Fallows's argument concerns the structure and equipment of our conventional forces. The book's twin assertions are that American forces are deficient because the Pentagon buys excessively complicated and expensive weapons, and because military leaders lack an appreciation of the "intangibles" (a favorite word) of war fighting—they lack "fighting spirit." In both cases Fallows concentrates on the perverse dynamics of the military establishment. He argues that a "culture of procurement" (rather than, for example, the cupidity of the defense industry) causes the Pentagon to buy wonder weapons that perform perfectly on clean test grounds but fail in the dirt and chaos of the battlefield. Similarly, Fallows criticizes careerism in the officer corps and a host of personnel practices (e.g., rotation of individuals rather than units) that subvert the cohesion of social groups and thereby undermine morale and spirit. In the same vein he denounces the "civilianization of the military," its reliance on "management" rather than "leadership," and its substitution of the ethos of business for that of war.

Throughout the book, Fallows makes copious use of articles by and interviews with officers, bureaucrats, and consultants who have long criticized the Pentagon from within. He concludes his analysis with a chapter on "changes"—reforms which, he maintains, would help create psychologically rugged armed forces equipped with cheap but potent weapons.

Only one of seven chapters deals with nuclear weapons, and that in a tentative way. Fallows calls such issues theological, which suggests that they are too abstruse to understand and not really worth the effort. A preliminary chapter makes the case that it may be *economically* impossible to spend more on defense. How we managed to spend 8.5 percent of our gross national product on defense under Kennedy but cannot afford to spend 6 percent now, Fallows does not explain. He does not have to, really, because, as he makes quite clear, he would advance the same arguments even if there were no economic constraints to be considered.

FALLOWS begins his indictment of American military technology with a case-study of the army's acquisition of the M-16 rifle during the Vietnam conflict. "During those years [1965-69] in which more than 40,000 American soldiers were killed by hostile fire and more than 250,000 wounded, American troops in Vietnam were equipped with a rifle their superiors knew would fail when put to the test."

Leaving aside the fact that the M-16's problems were cured by 1968, we see that Fallows has loaded the dice by suggesting that American soldiers died or suffered wounds because their weapons did not work. In fact, however, most American casualties were caused by booby traps, mines, mortar or rocket fire, or the opening bursts of an ambush, and so had nothing to do with weapons carried. Fallows calls the M-16 story "the purest portrayal of the banality of evil in the records of modern American defense." Being a Harvard graduate and a Rhodes scholar, Fallows undoubtedly knows that he thereby puts those who bought the M-16 in the same category as Adolf Eichmann, and their actions in the same class as those that took place at Buchenwald and Treblinka.

Innuendo aside, the story that Fallows presents is distorted beyond recognition. He has nothing but contempt for what Thomas McNaugher, the most thorough student of the decision to buy the M-16, has called "a notably successful case of weapons innovation." The M-16 did suffer initial problems, no doubt, but, as McNaugher has pointed out, military innovation, particularly in the field of small arms, is tremendously difficult because of the inevitable constraints caused by technological uncertainty, the military need for logistical simplicity, and the effect of military traditions—in this case the desire for weapons accurate at long ranges—which have something to do with "fighting spirit."

The way in which Fallows handles the M-16 controversy can be judged from the following typical note concerning the history of the army's weapons purchases. Fallows records that the army dropped the

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repeating rifle from its arsenals after the Civil War. "Many of the purchasers were Indians, who used it on their marauding raids—including their attack on George A. Custer at the Little Bighorn. Near the bodies of Custer's men were found their standard-issue army rifles, the [single-shot] Trap-Door Springfields." This melodramatic portrait of humble soldiers paying with their lives for the criminal blindness of their superiors should be set against McNaugher's version of the army's acquisition policy in those years, which Fallows does not cite:

> Many critics attribute the army's reluctance to adopt a magazine rifle to the Ordnance Department's hidebound attachment to the army's rifle tradition. . . . They fail to note the "user's" role in the process. Troops who line-tested various magazine guns in 1882 uniformly rejected them in favor of their single-shot breechloaders.*

In the rest of the book, rather than denouncing the military for Blimpish attachment to outmoded ideas, Fallows prefers to damn it for being seduced (or occasionally bribed) by the high-technology equivalent of snake-oil salesmen. The result, he tells us, has been a whole series of costly but worthless gadgets. An example is the Tube-launched Optically-tracked Wire-guided antitank missile (TOW), which requires that its operator stay exposed for about ten seconds while homing in on a tank—a requirement that endangers the operator considerably. What Fallows fails to suggest is an alternative—*no* portable antitank weapons? A return to guns, which are quite as vulnerable if not more so, and less efficient to boot? Invention of "fire-and-forget" missiles—even more expensive than TOW?

In the field of fighter aircraft there *is* an alternative, Fallows asserts. As in the case of the M-16, he has a villain, the technology-crazed air-force generals who bought the F-15—a large, expensive, multipurpose fighter-bomber—and a hero, or rather two heroes: Pierre Sprey, a dashing young systems analyst, and John Boyd, a grizzled Korean war ace who helped design the F-16, a lightweight fighter plane. (In Fallows's drama the heroes are robbed of victory because the air force succeeds in adding various gewgaws to the plane.)

Now, the F-16 under certain circumstances is indeed a better dogfighter than the F-15, because it is extremely small and maneuverable. But Fallows fails to take seriously the arguments for the F-15. For example, the F-15 with its sophisticated radars is an all-weather aircraft, whereas the F-16 is basically a daylight, fair-weather plane—and one cannot assume that the Soviets will be so gracious as to fight only during the daytime in nice weather. Extremely cheap small fighters are good for only one purpose—dogfights—but suppose an air force must suddenly help contain enemy ground forces? Furthermore, an airplane like the F-15 is necessary not merely to protect one's own airspace but to win superiority over enemy lines in order to cover other aircraft on bombing missions and the like—and for that it needs more endurance and radars than might a pure dogfighter. Finally, the Israeli air force, for which Fallows has nothing but praise, buys and uses F-15's—should he not have asked himself why?

There is a case for the F-16—in fact, when combined with the F-15 the result is a very formidable air-combat team indeed. And it is true that the Pentagon sometimes buys needlessly expensive and complicated or downright inferior weapons. But Fallows is preoccupied with matters that have nothing to do with the merits of the case. His aim is to depict a constant struggle between a few doomed but valiant rebel insiders and a horde of bureaucrats who are parochial at best and vicious at worst. And he wishes to condemn *all* expensive technology. (That which he cannot condemn he ignores—there is only one, dismissive reference to the E-2 and AWACS flying radar command posts, which are both costly and extremely useful.)

* "Marksmanship, McNamara, and the M-16 Rifle," *Public Policy*, Winter 1980.

The Heresy of Self-Love

A Study of Subversive Individualism

PAUL ZWEIG

"Paul Zweig first published 'The Heresy of Self-Love' in 1968, when all the babble—on peace marches and at rock concerts was about new forms of community. Now, in 1980, when all the babble is about our dangerous and perhaps psychotic inwardness, 'Heresy' reappears in a handsome paperback from Princeton, and it is as if a gust of wit had blown in through the black window and scattered the gloomy axioms. . . . [Zweig] is entertaining on the subjects of mirrors and alchemy. He has original things to say on . . . love poetry. . . . His essay on Rousseau is a masterly miniature. . . . Mr. Zweig, in his brilliant book, seduces."—*John Leonard, The New York Times Book Review*
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Having assailed the armed services for being at once hidebound and spendthrift, Fallows flays them for paying insufficient attention to those intellectual and social-psychological elements which make armies fight intelligently and well. Here criticism is indeed justified. The "civilianizing" and bureaucratizing of the military, the neglect of strategy and the too great reliance on a war-fighting tactics of attrition, the pernicious consequences of excessive rotation of personnel—all come under deserved attack. Fallows invokes Army Chief of Staff General Edward Meyer, James Webb, S.L.A. Marshall, Richard Gabriel, and Edward Luttwak to show that the army (which bears the brunt of his critique) has paid little attention to the cultivation of fighting spirit—the creation of a corps of spirited soldiers led by intelligent warrior officers.

But Fallows again dodges the hard questions. The "fighting spirit" he calls for surely requires the cultivation, and enhancement, of typically male qualities and relationships, yet Fallows is virtually silent on the introduction of women into many units of the armed forces, a development which the apparent logic of his position should lead him to deplore. When he senses a clash between the requirements of "fighting spirit" and his liberal convictions, he simply rejects the implications of his own critique: "Much of the grumbling about today's army from tough-guy type officers is nothing more than whining about any departure from the days when men were men and dames were dames and civilians knew their place."

In his discussion of the American army's reliance on attrition strategies, Fallows is on surer ground, although he underestimates the extent to which attrition was a concept imposed by civilian analysts (who for the most part are dealt with more lightly than their military counterparts) in search of quantifiable measures of tactical success. Responsible experts disagree over the question of whether wheeling maneuvers will be possible in another European war, given the extraordinary density of forces in relation to front—which, after all, was the source of military deadlock in 1914-17. What Fallows does not seem to accept is that clever strategy counts only for so much in dealing with a canny and determined opponent.

A brilliant British officer who served under Orde Wingate in Burma, John Masters, put this point succinctly:

> . . . [A]gainst a brave and well-led enemy all war hinges on the ability to destroy the enemy's main armed forces in pitched battle. . . . The reason for this stark fact is that sooner or later one side will attack something—a city, a port, a supply line, the army itself—which the other side must defend. Civilian leaders have always hated the idea and tried in a thousand ways to find a way around it. But—to take recent history alone—after needless expenditure of blood, time, and treasure they have always had to call on the Grants, Pershings, Fochs, Haigs, Montgomerys, and Slims to do the job. None of these men necessarily did the job in the best possible way; they commanded their nations' armies because they had a single-minded grasp of the nature of the job itself.

Here, I think, we have the main issue. Fallows and other theorists of a cheaper (but of course better) defense generally avoid facing the reality of war as a hideously costly and unpredictable venture. Rather than accept the notion that war occasionally becomes a grim slugging match, they delude themselves with visions of a knockout early in the second round. When it comes to weapons, rather than tolerating expenditure on a variety, some of which will turn out superbly while others will fail miserably, they hope to find the single, simple cheap solution.

This solution does not exist in weapons any more than it does in tactics. It is no accident that the same British arms industry that produced the Spitfire produced the pitifully slow and undergunned I-tank, as it is no accident that the Israelis who so daringly smashed the Egyptians with deep tank thrusts in 1967 suffered defeats six years later because they practiced too little the more ponderous arts of combined arms operations.

Fallows is not a kind or even a fair critic. He has made an impressive effort to learn the details of the current defense debate without learning to empathize with most of his interlocutors. In the case of the M-16 and elsewhere he is all too willing to stoop to innuendo and insult. In a self-serving section on "extra-rational" factors in the conduct of the debate over America's defenses, he makes much of the fact that a number of well-known conservatives have done no military service. So what? In the introduction to this book Fallows tells us that he was a Vietnam draft-dodger: after this confession (if it is such) the message of his *ad hominem* attacks seems to be that whereas he has overcome his irrational biases (because he flaunts them), others can be dismissed because they have yet to do so.

Fallows wants a strong defense: for what? It transpires that he believes force would be useless in securing oil supplies in the Persian Gulf. Aside from that, all he seems to wish us to prepare for is war in Europe. But even this is concealed by his peculiar claim that defense policy can somehow be discussed separately from foreign policy. In fact, Fallows says that "foreign-policy discussions usually aggravate the worst tendencies in thinking about defense." To the contrary, it is of prime importance that the discussion be linked, if only so that we may learn when we are asking defense policy to do contradictory or incompatible things—such as preparing for small wars on the Eurasian periphery while also training and organizing for a large conventional war in Europe.

This book has a number of the details right, but the overall argument is wrong, and the depiction of persons and groups is grossly, and sometimes viciously, unfair. Contrary to Fallows's premises, war is expensive, war is bloody, and war is about politics. No strategic or technological sleight of hand can make it otherwise; neither can such legerdemain make the preparation for war anything but a costly and unpredictable business.

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Back to the Melting Pot?

THE ETHNIC MYTH: RACE, ETHNICITY, and CLASS IN AMERICA. By STEPHEN STEINBERG. *Atheneum. 277 pp. $14.95.*

Reviewed by HOWARD BROTZ

THIS book is an attack on the doctrine of cultural, or ethnic, pluralism—an attack which is in principle long overdue.

As propounded by Horace Kallen in 1915, when New York City was teeming with immigrants, cultural pluralism was an argument against the idea of America as a "melting pot." Kallen's benign social intention was to help create an atmosphere in which immigrants and their descendants could have both respect and self-respect without trying to run away from themselves. His notion of "pluralism" thus appealed to the "charm of diversity" and to the contributions which people of different nationalities and religions could make on the highest level to the common good of the country.

Yet diversity, as we have since come to learn, has reasonable limits. Evidently in order for "cultural pluralism" to be viable, there must also be a fundamental "monism" at work in society to prevent it from disintegrating. If so, the ethnic issue is but a footnote to a more fundamental political issue. Can a liberal democracy survive if a large segment of the population neither believes in it nor has the habits, civic education, and personal stake in it necessary to make it work? This is the cluster of themes which any serious critique of cultural pluralism would have to deal with explicitly. Steinberg's critique fails utterly to do so, in part because he is aiming at something else.

Steinberg conceives of his book as a polemic not against old Horace Kallen (whom he mentions only in the last pages) but against a number of contemporary writers,

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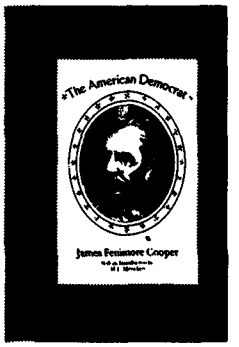

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particularly Nathan Glazer and Daniel P. Moynihan, whom he accuses of "celebrating ethnicity." Against both them and the "ethnic fever" which he contends they have stimulated, he proposes a speedy return to the old ideal of the melting pot. In his opinion, there is no basis for a genuine pluralism in America. The diverse cultures of the immigrants have worn thin, new generations have come of age which do not even know the languages spoken by their immigrant grandparents and great-grandparents, and the rate of intermarriage among ethnic groups has so increased that ultimate amalgamation is historically inevitable. Thus, to regard the framework of voluntary ethnic communities in America as a key feature of its society and politics—as Glazer, Moynihan, and many others have done—is to harbor romantic illusions and to crave a return to a past that cannot be restored.

But this charge is misplaced. The writers Steinberg opposes are perfectly aware that immigrant groups have become Americanized and have entered the middle class (Steinberg even acknowledges this). Moreover, to describe the working of ethnicity is not the same as to celebrate it. The Irish, to cite one example, have been around a long time, and their social situation today is far different from what it was in the 19th century. Yet it would be just as imprudent for a politician to insult them today as it was in 1884 when James G. Blaine lost the Presidency because of that fatal remark about "rum, Romanism, and rebellion." To the prediction that a hundred years hence the Irish will be so "amalgamated" they will not know what this remark signifies, it suffices to reply that *they would know now*. This, in a nutshell, is the political thrust of the recent studies of ethnicity, and it cannot be disputed.

In any case, Steinberg himself actually seems to be more nostaligic than are the so-called celebrators of ethnicity he castigates. It is not they but he who laments the disappearance of the rich heritage of the immigrants and the pre-industrial cultures of the native Indians. It is not they but he who takes such a dim view of contemporary American culture that after advocating assimilation for the length of his book he asks bleakly on the final page, "Assimilate into what?" When one contrasts this pessimism with the buoyancy of all those leaders, past and present, who have enthusiastically established communal centers and educational institutions for the fellow members of their ethnic groups, it turns out to be a very strange and soured "amalgamation" indeed that Steinberg is proposing.

THEN what is the real basis of Steinberg's quarrel with the students of ethnicity? It appears to be his conviction that the idea of culture, or ethnicity, or what used to be called in the 19th century "national character," can be abused in a "conservative" direction—by serving as the basis for invidious comparisons among groups. Yet Steinberg is too much the social scientist to take leave of the term culture altogether. There are, after all, clearly observable differences in group behavior that cannot be denied, and they range from the apparently serious to the apparently trivial. Thus, the English form orderly queues at bus stops while the French, to avoid "friction," have to take tickets in a numbered sequence from a machine (as New Yorkers do in busy food shops). Whether this trait in the English character may be attributed to the Magna Carta, to the climate, or to a diet of fish and chips is interesting to speculate about, but the point is that this *is* the way the English do things, whether one admires it or disdains it; and this behavior is stable enough to be unaffected in the short run even by political convulsions.

Accordingly, Steinberg accepts the term culture and uses it himself. He denies, however, that it has any genuine explanatory value. Culture itself must be explained by its "material," i.e., economic, causes. For to invoke culture as the primary cause of the differences in behavior of different ethnic groups serves in his opinion to lay the groundwork for a new and pernicious form of Social Darwinism.

Thus, Steinberg does not deny that the Jews and Chinese in the United States have experienced more rapid economic mobility on the whole than have the blacks. But then he claims that to explain the differences among these groups on the basis of such "cultural values" as religion, respect for education, or family solidarity is to make culture or ethnicity into a "myth." It is reasoning backward, inferring the efficacy of the "cultural values" from the fact of the group's behavior. In making such an inference one is repeating the mistake of 19th-century racial theorists, only substituting culture for genes to explain why the successful succeed. In Steinberg's view, what counts is not culture but such material circumstances as the possession of industrial skills at the time they were needed. Indeed, the "cultural" explanation is not only inaccurate, it also gives people who have succeeded in overcoming poverty a moral credit they are not entitled to.

GIVEN this polemical intention, it is not hard to understand why Steinberg gives such high priority in this book to "demystifying" what he calls the "Jewish Horatio Alger Story." If nothing else, he is determined to make it impossible for anyone ever again to hold the Jews up as a model for what minority groups can achieve in the United States. To this end, he stresses the fact that the immigrant Jewish poor, by and large, did not go to universities, which is true; that there still are poor Jews, which is true; and that there were Jewish prostitutes, burglars, and even gangsters on the old Lower East Side, which is also true. All this, he contends, shows the force of material circumstances versus "culture."

Steinberg also feels obliged to rescue the ethnic honor of other groups from invidious comparisons that might be made with the "more successful" Jews. One chapter is concerned to prove that the Irish, who unlike the Jews and Italians worked as domestic servants, did not do so because of any "cultural" tradition of "doing degrading work." Another, called "The Myth of Jewish Intellectualism and Cath-

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olic Anti-Intellectualism," points out that since many Italian immigrants were illiterate peasants from the south, they should not be compared with Jews, who had the material advantage of being town-dwellers.

To clinch this last point, Steinberg is compelled to argue that many more Eastern European Jews came to this country from cities, and many fewer from rural villages —the *shtetl* celebrated by historians and sentimentalists alike—than is commonly supposed. He asserts that according to a Russian census of 1897, three-quarters of the Jews in the Pale of Settlement lived in "urban areas," which would mean that they had access to modern industrial procedures. He also states that Jews in Poland had made a mark in textile manufacturing before the turn of the century, establishing themselves as operatives or owners in such industrial centers as Warsaw.

But would not the Russian census figures have included the *shtetl*, which means, after all, small town? Without examining the criteria used in this census, one has no way of knowing for sure. And as for the Jews in textile manufacturing, Steinberg fails to point out that they did not constitute a significant element in the mass emigration of Eastern European Jewry. For every Jew who had acquired genuine industrial experience in major Polish cities, there were dozens of others from small towns who had eked out a small living as petty tradesmen and craftsmen.

Steinberg does not apprehend the central point: that what enabled the *shtetl* Jew, who had never worked in a textile factory or even as a tailor, to get a foothold in America was the fact that he found here an Orthodox, Yiddish-speaking employer who was prepared to take him on and teach him a wholly new trade, in a workshop which was entirely Yiddish-speaking and where all the religious holidays were observed.

One need not drag in "culture" or even "ethnic solidarity" to understand this—the employer, who did not speak English too well himself, needed labor. Nor need one impute to the immigrant worker some abstraction like "middle-class values" to explain his industriousness. Such abstractions only serve to distort human reality. What really motivated the Jewish immigrant was not "the drive to get to the top" but the desire to earn a living, in order to support his family or to save up the price of passage to bring over his wife and children who had remained behind in Europe. This experience was the typical one for large numbers of immigrants. That Steinberg blurs it merely points up the lifeless quality of his excursion into the sociology of the Jews.

That same lifelessness is reflected in the disjunction he makes between "culture" (non-material) and "skill" (material). If the word "culture" means anything it means way of life. But who, from Aristotle to the present day, ever thought that the manner in which people earn their livelihood had nothing to do with their way of life? And who on earth would call the possession of a skill—which must be learned and hence requires some expenditure of personal effort—a "material" factor? Are human beings inert matter, simply acted upon by external forces, with no more inwardness than a rock?

ACTUALLY, the whole question of skills and industrial training seems to make Steinberg uneasy. In the case of the Jews he subsumes this category under the rubric of "material factors." In the case of the blacks, however, he avoids any real discussion of vocational or industrial training since even to raise the subject is in his view tantamount to blaming the blacks for their plight. Steinberg deprecates job-training as a "liberal remedy" which limits itself to the "politically safe" goal of "reforming the poor"—whereas what is needed is to "institute sweeping changes that could redistribute income." In this he differs sharply from black leaders like Frederick Douglass, who

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pleaded: "Try to get your sons into trades; of all men in the world who need trades we are the most needy." Does this mean that Steinberg, unlike Frederick Douglass, thinks that blacks are unteachable? No, but it does mean that he draws no moral distinction between those *who want to be taught and those* who do not.

Toward the end of the book Steinberg acknowledges the existence of a "new" educated black middle class and he admits that it is not merely a "token." But the only way he can account for the emergence of this class is to say that it "owes its existence to the ghetto revolts of the 1960's," when frightened corporations began to hire blacks. It is almost insulting to have to point out that there were many blacks before—long before—1960 who thought it worthwhile, both "culturally" and "materially," to get an education whether or not they could be taken on as trainees in the management program of some corporation. For years black leaders have sounded such slogans as "Green Power Equals Black Power." For years, too, they have been personally involved in promoting all sorts of communal improvement activities, though these activities may have been overshadowed by their public struggle against unequal laws. When slavery was still in existence, Frederick Douglass was giving his addresses to the free black communities in the North about the importance of education and self-help, and evidently saw no conflict between this activity and his Abolitionist agitation. One of the pathetic things about Steinberg's book is that the people it is trying to protect from the pain of effort have far higher standards for themselves than he does.

Steinberg begins his book by saying that the Jews and Chinese cannot be used as models for change among blacks. By the time one reaches the end, one realizes that in the author's opinion neither can the blacks themselves. There can be no such models, in his view, because there are no standards, ethnic or otherwise; these are an impediment to equality. But if an ethnic group cannot be regarded as the custodian of valuable standards which play something of a role in its own life, the possibility of transethnic or universal human standards to which the members of all ethnic groups are in principle open does not even exist. Amalgamation then becomes indistinguishable not *from equality but from equality* at its lowest level. Thus, from every point of view, Steinberg's attack on ethnic and "cultural" values goes up in smoke.

Roots of Resistance

AMERICAN PATRIOTS AND THE RITUALS OF REVOLUTION. By PETER SHAW. *Harvard University Press. 279 pp. $17.50.*

Reviewed by JACK N. RAKOVE

ON AUGUST 14, 1765, a Boston crowd protesting the Stamp Act hung two effigies from an elm tree in the South End. One represented Andrew Oliver, the newly designated stamp distributor; the other featured a devil's imp concealed in a boot (a reference to the Earl of Bute, the Scottish botanist and former royal tutor whom the colonists wrongly regarded as the secret source of their troubles). At night the effigies were taken down, placed in a coffin, paraded about town, and finally burned. One group of "mourners" destroyed a small building belonging to Oliver, another broke into his house and consumed the contents of his wine cellar. The next day, Oliver offered to resign his commission. Eleven days after that, his brother-in-law, Lieutenant Governor (later Governor) Thomas Hutchinson, suffered equal humiliation and greater loss when another crowd ransacked his house, destroying everything but the kitchen furniture.

These two incidents have figured prominently in all recent histories of the beginnings of American resistance to England. They tell us something about the colonists' resort to "extralegal" coercion, the volatile nature of Boston politics, and the peculiar role that the furies of revolution were already reserving for the ill-fated Hutchinson. In the years to come, other crowds would reenact these early incidents, combining their distinctive elements of crude threats and arcane symbols into an effective vehicle of resistance.

If Peter Shaw is right, however, far more was at stake in such episodes than we have yet supposed. Like other recent students of the Revolution, Shaw believes that the stylized forms of colonial protest and the paranoiac strain of American rhetoric must be read for meanings that go well beyond the merely political dimensions of agitation. Shaw is not alone in assuming that "there were powerful, unconscious forces at play" among the patriots who led and joined the protests of the 1760's and 1770's. What sets his approach apart is the conviction that the forces that drove Americans to revolt may be uncovered in the ritual elements of their movement—much as skeptical commentators on the 1960's emphasize the forms rather than the objects of youthful protest.

Revolutionary rituals, Shaw argues, were of two kinds, public and private. The former were *rites de passage* performed "out-of-doors" by crowds, often youthful, who strung up effigies, tarred and feathered dissenters, baited soldiers, and commemorated their victories by proposing, and perhaps even drinking, 45 toasts (a figure hallowed in patriot numerology for its association with the cause of John Wilkes, the London radical and "friend of America"). Private rituals took the form of *crises de conscience* which individual patriots had to surmount to prepare themselves psychologically for the transfer of allegiance from British crown to American people.

The symbolism of the public rituals was elaborate indeed. In an impressive and imaginative analysis, Shaw succeeds in linking patriot demonstrations to the celebration of Guy Fawkes Day in England; to Pope Day, the New England derivative of that holiday; to the Wilkite demonstrations in contemporary England; and beyond all these, to an ancient tra-

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dition of saturnalian festivals in which authority could be at once mocked and reinforced.

But the dramatic center of his story consists of case-studies of the revolutionary ambivalence of four Massachusetts patriots: James Otis, John Adams, Joseph Hawley, and Josiah Quincy. All were "conscience patriots" who, repelled by the crowd's disorder, wavered either in their own political commitments or over the issue of independence. More to the point, their personal crises all centered on the figure of Hutchinson, toward whom they felt both hostility and, later, remorse. Hutchinson became a surrogate for the king they unconsciously hoped to overthrow and the scapegoat whose alleged treachery relieved the anxiety their own challenges to authority evoked.

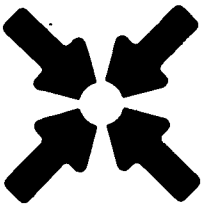
Shaw's conscience patriots do seem eligible for admission to a clinic for the rebelliously disturbed. Otis *was* mad (though not all of the time); Hawley, the son of a suicide, was given to hypochrondria and melancholy; the tubercular Quincy could not express anger easily; and John Adams was, well, John Adams. Hutchinson often thought his opponents acted deranged, and Shaw seems receptive to his diagnosis.

Left to their own devices, these men might not have been able to "work through" their anxieties about authority. The public rituals, however, helped to alleviate the patriots' private crises. As *rites de passage* rather than riots of passion, they made acceptable the defiance the patriots inwardly feared. In part this was because the rituals expressed an ambiguity that mirrored their own personal turmoil. The crowds continued to proclaim loyalty to George III but were nevertheless mocking his representatives. And the public rituals had a further, therapeutic function. They constituted, in effect, rehearsals for the revolution —for the killing of the king—that the colonists unconsciously desired. As rehearsals they retained an essential ambiguity, but they also "predicted, anticipated, and even encouraged revolution"—which is to say that they gave men like Adams the fortitude they otherwise lacked to see the thing through.

SHAW is not the first to examine the psychological roots of resistance, but his emphasis on patriot ambivalence and guilt reverses the judgments that other scholars have offered. Usually it is the loyalists who are made to appear less than self-reliant, unable to support resistance because their own insecurity left them dependent on established authority figures: fathers, patrons, kings. The revolutionaries, by contrast, have been portrayed more favorably as men whose confidence and sense of autonomy enabled them to renounce a king and resolve to govern themselves. Not so, Shaw implies. There is no reason to believe that the revolutionaries "represented psychological types more highly evolved in personal traits of independence than their contemporaries."

The notion that patriots were better adjusted while loyalists were somehow stunted reflects, of course, the almost irresistible biases of our national history. There is much to be said for Shaw's efforts to depict the anxieties that a looming revolution may engender among its supporters and opponents alike. Where the last generation of historians has tended to explain the Revolution as a result more of British stupidity than American restiveness, Shaw brings us back to an earlier view which questioned far more severely the motives—or perhaps one should say the impulses —of the rebels. If Shaw too often gives Hutchinson the benefit of the doubt—the governor was not quite the disinterested public servant here portrayed—he does succeed in showing why the patriots' defenses of their actions may also be doubted.

Yet having said this, one must immediately add that Shaw's admittedly eclectic argument is subject to some formidable objections. Some of these concern the anthropological apparatus he brings to bear on the public rituals, which seems to combine some very fashionable and some very dated ideas. Others, to my mind more important, concern underlying problems of historical interpretation.



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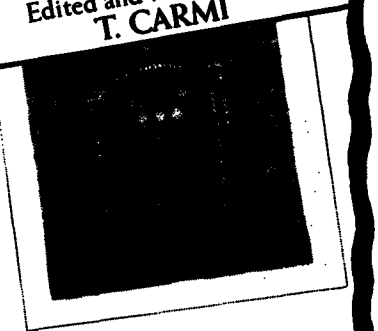

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Shaw's approach would be more convincing if it were confined to asking what the coming of revolution meant to these individuals and to showing how the two forms of ritual could both express tensions and ease doubts. Yet despite a disclaimer that he is offering not an "interpretation" of the Revolution but only a "reading of its ritual language," Shaw's reading often verges into an explanation of why the Revolution occurred. And here his analysis becomes overextended. It is, after all, one thing to say that some men revolt because of deep personal anxieties. It is another thing entirely to imply that revolutions occur because such anxieties exist. What is at issue involves more than the obvious objection that Shaw risks reducing the event he is illuminating to trivial proportions.

THREE assumptions seem critical to Shaw's explanation of why the defiance of authority so tormented the conscience patriots. The first is that habits of deference to the king were so deeply rooted in America that the inclination to challenge, much less overthrow, his rule was not easily confronted. A second assumption is that to his antagonists Hutchinson was indeed "a figure of political and social authority who was the equivalent, much in the manner of a king, of the father in a family." Finally, Shaw assumes that in defying the king symbolically, and Hutchinson personally, the colonists by 1765 already desired the independence they attained a full decade later.

There are serious problems with each of these positions. To begin with, Shaw's image of kingship seems more appropriate to 17th-century absolutist claims than to 18th-century constitutional monarchy. The affection that Americans expressed for a distant, unseen king was florid but superficial, cheaply offered, and, in the end, not so difficult to revoke. Although the petitions they sent George III were reverently couched, the language reflected the logic of the colonists' constitutional arguments, which led them to exalt the connection between crown and colonies in order to weaken parliament's claim to supremacy over America.

The notion that all officials of government were still "invested" with "the aura of kingly presence" is also questionable. Many colonists might have welcomed a bit more kingly presence in their officials, since the men who actually represented imperial authority possessed precious little. These officials were either the visible beneficiaries of a patronage system so elaborate it could have drawn praise from the late Mayor Daley, or colonists who had found influential patrons "at home" in England. But such connections were gained at a price: American appointees often found themselves commanding the resentment rather than the respect of their countrymen. The possession of office bestowed no royal luster. Some governors established miniature courts, but their power was social, not magical.

This was the situation confronting Hutchinson. He and his remarkably interbred family had a stranglehold over the highest positions in Massachusetts. But the only thing that seemed to set the Hutchinson-Oliver clan apart was its success. The trappings of kingship were too feeble to count for anything—and Hutchinson knew it. The expedients he continually urged his superiors to adopt all implied not the awesome character of his authority but its weakness.

The final weakness in Shaw's argument is the most telling. It is true that, from 1765 on, patriots and imperial officials alike believed that the quarrel with Britain could well end in independence. But no evidence exists to corroborate Shaw's view that independence was what the patriot leaders and their festive followers desired all along —unless we choose to elevate his interpretation of their unconscious wishes over the more accessible sources we ordinarily prefer and have better reason to trust. American leaders long remained ambivalent about independence not because they shrank from the symbolic implications of killing a king, but because they doubted whether separation was in America's interest or whether, as John Adams observed in 1774, there was "spirit enough on either side to bring the question to a complete decision." The very word independence was itself, one should note, ambiguous. Until 1775 it tended to denote a rejection of parliamentary, not royal, authority.

OBJECTIONS such as these need not take away from much that is valuable in Shaw's book. His interpretation of the symbolism of political rituals illuminates meanings that no one has yet deciphered, much less fully appreciated. Similarly, his portrait of revolutionary ambivalence should help to free us from a tendency to depict American leaders as more purposeful and consistent than they actually were. But the problematic quality of some of his key assumptions suggests that this book should be conidered more provocative than persuasive.

Judicial Philosophy

THE ENIGMA OF FELIX FRANKFURTER. By H. N. HIRSCH. *Basic Books. 253 pp. $14.95.*

Reviewed by HERMAN BELZ

SCHOLARS of the law have long held that judicial decision-making depends at least as much on the political and social attitudes of judges as it does on the impartial application of legal rules and precedents. Pursuing this view, social scientists have constructed elaborate analyses of judicial attitudes based on the voting records of Supreme Court Justices. Curiously, however, the interest scholars have shown in non-legal sources of judicial conduct has not led to a corresponding attempt to explain judicial behavior on psychological grounds. H. N. Hirsch's biography of Felix Frankfurter tries to do just this. Applying the theories of Erik Erikson and Karen Horney, Hirsch attempts to explain the psychological motivations behind Frankfurter's career as a progressive reformer, legal scholar, and Supreme Court Justice.

The key to Frankfurter's person-

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ality, according to Hirsch, was a prolonged identity crisis born of a fundamental and persistent sense of insecurity. To overcome this disability, Frankfurter created an idealized image of himself as the rational man *par excellence*, the disinterested expert who attacks social injustice, defends the underdog, and is a militant foe of stupidity, passion, and ignorance. Formulated out of psychological necessity, Frankfurter's self-image not only dictated his choice of career but also shaped his particular political style.

The key to that style, in Hirsch's view, was Frankfurter's intolerance of any kind of opposition. Because such opposition threatened his self-image, he could not deal with it except by condemning those who disagreed with him as stupid and self-seeking. Just as he could be arrogant and self-righteous toward adversaries, however, so could Frankfurter also—out of the same psychological need to reinforce his self-image—resort to the most shameless flattery and the most sycophantic and adulatory behavior toward older authority figures like Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes.

Unappealing as it may appear, Frankfurter's style served him well. Starting from the secure base of operations provided by the Harvard Law School, and assisted by an extraordinary (and ethically dubious) financial arrangement whereby Supreme Court Justice Louis D. Brandeis secretly gave him $3,500 a year to promote various causes, Frankfurter by the 1920's had become a nationally prominent liberal reformer. In the 30's he steered President Franklin D. Roosevelt in the direction of Brandeisian liberalism, and brought scores of liberals into the government. In Hirsch's estimate. Frankfurter was the single most important non-elected official in the administration. He argues that Frankfurter's personality and behavior decisively affected the history of the New Deal, since Frankfurter succeeded, as he puts it, in "persuading the President to make his [own] opponents the opponents of the administration."

Thus, when Frankfurter was appointed to the Supreme Court in 1939, he had every expectation of becoming the Court's intellectual and ideological leader. Yet the success that he had enjoyed earlier eluded him in this new institutional setting. Strong-willed colleagues who refused to be intimidated by his invective or cajoled by his flattery became enemies. In particular, the libertarians Douglas, Black, and Murphy made Frankfurter's jurisprudential life miserable. According to Hirsch, Frankfurter responded to this challenge from the libertarians by operating within the same pattern of psychological necessity that had determined the course of his political career: he adopted the ideology of judicial restraint and clung to it tenaciously throughout his period on the Court.

UP UNTIL this point, Hirsch's book is illuminating. It throws light on certain well-known aspects of Frankfurter's personality—his intellectual pugnacity, his willingness to assume an adversarial role, his self-righteousness, and his eagerness for praise—and it does so for the most part without the use of jargon. But the book is considerably less illuminating when Hirsch attempts to go beyond Frankfurter's personality and explain his judicial ideology too on psychological grounds.

Frankfurter, it must be said, has never seemed a particularly puzzling figure, yet to Hirsch, as the title of this book indicates, he presents a problem: how did this militant liberal, committed to the defense of civil liberties before his appointment to the Supreme Court, turn into a judicial conservative *after* his appointment? To pose the problem in this way, I would argue, is already to set up a false dilemma.

One of the key cases Hirsch cites in his analysis of Frankfurter's ideological shift is the famous flag-salute case of 1940, *Minersville School District* v. *Gobitis*. Did chil-

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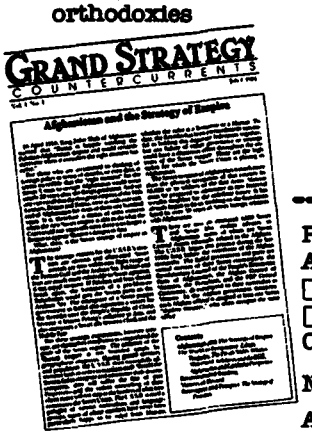

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dren who were members of Jehovah's Witnesses have a constitutional right to refuse to salute the flag, or did the state of Pennsylvania have the rightful power to require them as public-school students to pledge allegiance? Noting Frankfurter's previous strong support of civil-liberties claims, Hirsch says it was conceivable that he could have decided in favor of the religious minority and steered the Court in a libertarian direction. Yet because of his patriotism, his belief in the power of national symbols, and his psychological need to act the disinterested judge, Frankfurter found for the state.

The significance of this case, moreover, went far beyond the denial of the claimed immunity, for with his *Gobitis* opinion, Hirsch argues, Frankfurter boxed himself into the ideological corner of judicial restraint. Taking what Hirsch calls the "fateful" step of refusing to rank constitutional values according to any hierarchy of importance, he gave up the opportunity to develop a "truly creative jurisprudence." Yet, Hirsch implies, so unsound was the philosophy of judicial restraint that Frankfurter could not maintain it consistently. Like the judicial activists he deplored, Frankfurter did at times identify fundamental values and made them the basis of decisions, thereby contradicting the theory of judicial deference.

HIRSCH thus holds that Frankfurter's psychologically rooted fixation on judicial restraint was a betrayal of the liberal reform tradition, and one which had a decisive impact on constitutional development. Though provocative, the argument lacks solid historical grounding. Hirsch observes, for example, that the great liberal heroes Frankfurter worshipped—Holmes and Brandeis—represented, respectively, skepticism and a commitment to rational schemes of social improvement. Hirsch says that Frankfurter was really closer to Brandeis, but for psychological reasons identified more with Holmes. Accordingly, he set aside his "almost implicit [*sic*] commitment to greater judicial scrutiny of civil liberties than of economics, and a belief in the existence of fundamental values and a hierarchy of values in the Constitution."

But Hirsch is applying hindsight here. While it is clear in retrospect that Holmes and Brandeis differed in their judicial outlook, to contemporaries they appeared very similar. Both were regarded as liberals, since judicial liberalism referred either to the social outcomes which courts might promote through decisions invalidating or reinterpreting legislation, or to the procedural restraint that alternatively might lead them to defer to legislative judgments when progressive laws were at issue. In other words, the sharp distinction between result-oriented judicial activism and process-oriented judicial restraint had not yet emerged.

For his part, Frankfurter placed a high value on the defense of civil liberties, but like most liberals he saw no contradiction between this position and advocacy of judicial restraint. On the contrary: because the Supreme Court had so consistently used the power of judicial review to strike down progressive legislation, the principal meaning of judicial liberalism before 1937 was deference to legislatures. Thus, Frankfurter's elaboration of this theme represented a fulfillment of the reform tradition, rather than the aberration that Hirsch suggests it was.

THE problem that needs historical analysis is not Frankfurter's failure to become a libertarian activist but rather the changing nature of judicial liberalism. Nor is the issue especially "enigmatic." Once laissez-faire jurisprudence was repudiated in the constitutional revolution of 1937, judicial liberalism, against Frankfurter's efforts, grew increasingly concerned with achieving liberal results at the expense of traditional procedural constraints. Again, the flag-salute controversy serves as an illustration. The Supreme Court on several occasions had refused to consider First Amendment objections to compulsory flag-salute laws; Frankfurter's *Gobitis* opinion therefore plainly comported with existing constitutional law. But because the result was offensive to liberal opinion, the libertarian bloc on the Court changed its mind and in an identical case in 1943 repudiated Frankfurter's *Gobitis* opinion. Thereafter, as Ronald Dworkin has pointed out, the adjudicative technique of liberals such as Justice Douglas was to decide beforehand on the desired political result in a given case, and then to seek constitutional or legal reasons to justify it.

Judicial liberalism thus became politicized, though its political character was largely obscured by the Court's frequent reliance on the preferred-freedoms doctrine. Introduced by Justice Harlan Fiske Stone in 1938, this doctrine held that judicial review, previously thought to be in some sense undemocratic, actually promoted democracy when it was used to invalidate legislation which on its face restricted the political process or interfered with the rights of religious, racial, or national minorities. Since minority groups played a key part in the New Deal coalition, the preferred-freedoms theory neatly served the political purposes of the Roosevelt administration.

HIRSCH's unacknowledged assumptions prevent him from examining such questions, and weaken the historical value of his study considerably. He does not even entertain the possibility that Frankfurter might have been right, for example, when he accused his libertarian colleagues of deciding cases on political grounds, or claimed that they did not really believe their own professions of judicial philosophy but were concerned to *appear* liberal in the forum of public opinion. Frankfurter's animadversions against the libertarians are presented as evidence of his pathology rather than as possibly accurate descriptions based on fact. Indeed, Hirsch writes about the philosophy of judicial restraint as though it were an affliction, a kind of mental bondage which kept Frankfurter from developing in the proper direction. To prove how inhibiting this rigidly austere doctrine could become, Hirsch cites Frankfurter's opinions in *Dennis* v. *United States* and *Baker* v. *Carr* as though there were absolutely no room for

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argument about the wisdom of the libertarian activist position which Frankfurter attacked in these particular cases.

Because of his reductionist approach to ideology, Hirsch is unable to appreciate the role Frankfurter played as the keeper, in Philip Kurland's words, of the legend of a nonpartisan Supreme Court dedicated to the maintenance of a government of laws. Nor does Hirsch appreciate the extent to which Frankfurter was vindicated in that role. It is true that in the early 40's he lost a series of struggles with the libertarians. But doctrinaire libertarianism proved to be unworkable and was eventually superseded by general reliance on Frankfurter's balancing technique in First Amendment cases. Far from concluding his career in defeated isolation, Frankfurter in the 1950's and 1960's won a devoted following among a new generation of legal scholars who insisted on reasoned elaboration of neutral principles as the proper basis of constitutional adjudication.

As practiced by Frankfurter and adapted in the thought of disciples such as Alexander M. Bickel, judicial restraint was by no means the archaic and inflexible dogma that it appears to be in this book. Its basic point was that in a democratic society the people's elected representatives, rather than nonelected judges, ought to determine public policy. Expressed positively with respect to the judiciary, it held that courts make an essential contribution to constitutional government by settling conflicts arising out of the application of the laws, and that in order to perform this function they must remain politically impartial and objective.

Sociological jurisprudence and legal realism had of course taught that a complete divorce between law and society was impossible, and Frankfurter and the theorists of judicial restraint acknowledged this fact. But that law and legal institutions inevitably possessed a political and social dimension was no reason to conclude that the idea of the rule of law counted for nothing and should be dismissed, as the legal realists appeared to do. On the contrary, to keep government and society from becoming totally politicized it was all the more important for constitutional disputes to be settled on the basis of general rules of law rather than considerations of expediency peculiar to individual judges.

Hirsch makes much of the fact that Frankfurter did not adhere with absolute fidelity to the canon of judicial deference, but occasionally substituted his own judgment of public policy for that of the legislature. In Hirsch's view this inconsistency further demonstrates the dead-end absurdity of the doctrine of judicial restraint. In fact, however, Frankfurter's position, while perhaps not logically satisfying, represented a useful compromise between traditional declarative jurisprudence and legal realism. Declarative jurisprudence (also called legal formalism and conceptualism) was not only politically unacceptable because of its identification with laissez-faire conservatism; it was intellectually discredited by the teachings of modern social science. Legal realism, on the other hand, though effective in attacking entrenched conservative orthodoxies, was too easily transformed into a doctrine of expediency and instrumentalism which denied the very idea of constitutionalism.

Frankfurter maneuvered between these two jurisprudential poles, defining a position that has been termed "social conceptualism." Accepting the social character of law and the inescapably political nature of much judicial decision-making, he nevertheless insisted that constitutional government depends on the preservation of an autonomous sphere of legal principles and action apart from the relentless forces of politics.

Hirsch is right in saying that Frankfurter never resolved the contradictions in his legal philosophy. But these contradictions—in essence the tension between law and politics which lies at the heart of American constitutionalism—were inherent in the institution of judicial review as it had evolved historically in the United States. The point was not to resolve these

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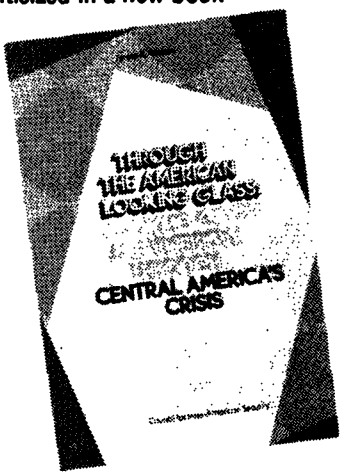

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tensions and contradictions in some ultimate fashion, but to adjust them in a creative and socially responsible way. Frankfurter understood this, and more than any of his fellow Justices in the New Deal era achieved a proper balance between law and politics in constitutional adjudication.

Nationalism vs. Ideology

RUSSIA'S FAILED REVOLUTIONS: FROM THE DECEMBRISTS TO THE DISSIDENTS. By ADAM B. ULAM. *Basic Books. 453 pp. $18.95.*

THE RISE OF THE GULAG: INTELLECTUAL ORIGINS OF LENINISM. *By* ALAIN BESANÇON. *Continuum. 329 pp. $19.50.*

Reviewed by MAURICE FRIEDBERG

As Adam B. Ulam acknowledges in his preface to *Russia's Failed Revolutions,* "This book does not purport to be a systematic history of the Russian revolutionary tradition. Rather it seeks an answer to the question: what was it that at decisive moments has flawed the libertarian intentions of Russia's revolutionaries and reformers?" The seven skillfully argued case-studies that comprise Ulam's impressive book, each of them a well-documented self-contained essay, span a period of one and a half centuries, from the abortive Decembrist coup of 1825 down to the present, with heavy emphasis on the two decades that preceded the Communist takeover of November 1917. And while the results are therefore strongly skewed, Ulam's collection of seemingly disjointed brief studies acquires a significant degree of cohesion through the common denominator of the author's thesis which is apparent in each of the essays.

Briefly, Ulam, who teaches history and political science at Harvard, believes that Russia's successive revolutions have failed to move that country toward a more humane form of government primarily because such an aim has traditionally been regarded as incompatible with Russia's national interests. In a multinational state, the idea of greater tolerance toward ethnic minorities was genuinely unpopular, not least because it unavoidably imparted a degree of legitimacy to demands of some ethnic groups for independent statehood. Thus, revolutionary programs of whatever hue could be viewed as blueprints for the ultimate dismemberment of the Russian empire. It did not avail, Ulam recalls, that quite a few of the revolutionaries, from the Decembrist Pestel onward, were themselves "quintessential Russian nationalists."

In addition to the barrier of nationalist concerns, the progress of liberal values was also hindered by a "psychological barrier": "National pride bridled at the idea that Russia should merely learn from and imitate Europe." Hence, according to Ulam, during the second half of the 19th century it was the liberal who was "conspicuous by his absence in [the] cast of main characters of the drama of Russian history."

That this is a considerable exaggeration is convincingly if indirectly attested by the ferocity of the attacks on liberals that were mounted at that time both from the Left and from the Right. Neither radical camp—neither that of Lenin nor the one personified by Pobedonostsev, the head of the Holy Synod—would have expended so much energy and effort on nonexistent political dangers, nor would Dostoevsky have troubled, in *The Possessed,* to satirize *two* leading liberals, the historian Granovsky as well as Turgenev. Ulam's underestimation of Russian liberals is compounded by his tendency to view Russian liberalism as a variety of Westernism alone. In fact, liberalism and Slavophilism were not entirely mutually exclusive (two examples come to mind: the novelist Nikolai Leskov and the theologian Vladimir Soloviev).

Nevertheless, Ulam's central thesis is essentially sound. Nineteenth- and early 20th-century Russian liberalism was indeed too weak to fight off enemies from both sides of the political spectrum, and Russian nationalism was and continues to serve as the ideological glue of that repressive state:

> It is mainly by draping itself with the national interest, appealing to Russian nationalism (and *Soviet patriotism* is but its synonym in an ideological guise), that autocratic regimes from Nicholas I's to Brezhnev's have sought to withstand pressures for liberalization and the demand for freedom.

Here it might be objected that the one *successful* Russian revolutionary upheaval, the Communist seizure of power in 1917, succeeded in spite of its anti-patriotic stance. Ulam concedes the point, but with reservations:

> In *Lenin in Zurich,* Solzhenitsyn portrays the father of the Communist state as possessed by an obsessive hatred of his own nation, a view which is both oversimplified and unjust. *Once in power* Lenin would amply demonstrate, even if unconsciously, that he was one of those Russian Communists of whom he himself said, "Scratch them and you will find Russian chauvinists."

Indeed, Ulam argues, of the various pre-Soviet revolutionary movements, "the Bolsheviks were the most 'Russian,' " more so than the Mensheviks or the Socialist Revolutionaries. (This may be one reason, he suggests, why the latter two parties had a higher percentage of Poles, Jews, and Georgians.) Still, the precise relation between Communism and Russian nationalism had to be worked out to insure the latter would not rule the former. Even if, "from the 30's on, the Soviet rulers would, under the euphemism of 'Soviet patriotism,' make [Russian nationalism] the main psychological prop and title deed of their power," this was a nationalism that was "their servant and not master."

The above implies that Communism's interests do not coincide with those of the Russian nation; in that case Solzhenitsyn is not altogether wrong, and tensions between Russian nationalism and Communist policies are a major vulnerability of the Soviet state.

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And this in turn would suggest that Western-oriented democratic dissenters and the various activist groupings from among the ethnic minorities which are incapable of attracting an appreciable Russian following constitute much less of a threat to Soviet authorities than Russian nationalists and Russian religious sectarians.

It so happens that this line of reasoning was followed a century ago by the Czarist authorities who persecuted Old Believer peasants with greater ferocity than they did revolutionary radicals, and banned the publication of Tolstoy's religious parables while permitting the appearance of *Das Kapital*. The rest is history.

Perhaps, in this connection, it is worth pointing to two political demands raised in imperial Russia, both cited in Ulam's book and both recently resurrected. The first, voiced in the 1860's, was the demand for *glasnost* ("openness"). It implied a government which, even if autocratic in form, would "operate in full view of society and with due regard for public opinion rather than having its policies formulated in secrecy by a small clique of officials, in its own way a sort of conspiracy." The second, raised in 1847 by Vissarion Belinsky, Russia's most influential literary critic of all time, appealed for a "strict observance of at least those laws which already exist." The first demand, as Ulam notes, has been revived by Solzhenitsyn. The second is a creed of those democratic dissenters still in the USSR.

As THE subtitle of his book suggests, Alain Besançon, the French historian and sociologist, has set himself the formidable aim of establishing the "intellectual origins of Leninism." Of that task he acquits himself with much distinction. His erudite volume, which draws on a dazzling array of sources ranging from theology to political journalism, is gracefully written, and while openly polemical is never really unfair toward those whose views it opposes.

Besançon defines ideology as "a system of interpretation allowing the justification of particular social situations, and allowing them to be perpetuated, according to the political power of class." Soviet ideology, which Besançon considers "incredibly simple," consists of two "intimately united" parts: "on the one hand it is a faith, on the other, a theory rationally argued and allegedly proved."

Concerning the religious, or "faith" component of Soviet ideology, Besançon writes that it shows several of the characteristics of gnosticism:

> A locked encyclopaedic system of cosmology and soteriology; the overinterpretation of history; a morality deriving from the doctrine, and taking its criteria from it; self-criticism as a way of reviewing understanding of the interpretative system; the relativization of man to his contribution

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to salvation; the division laid down between the militants and the masses; the militant, custodian of knowledge, ascetic, professional, freed from the ordinary tasks of life; and the geo-historical dualism between regions which are ontologically damned and regions which are saved.

Other religious elements within the Leninist creed are, in Besançon's view, of Eastern Orthodox origin, particularly the emphasis on liturgy rather than ethics, the glorification of sentiment and emotion as opposed to intellect, and the "maximalist" predilections. The latter trait helps explain the ambivalent attitude toward revolutionary excesses taken by such a committed adherent of Eastern Orthodoxy as Dostoevsky. (Besançon also suggests that the anti-rationalist, mystical, and visionary streaks in the Jewish religious tradition may have contributed to the attraction which Leninism held for many Jews.)

Among Leninism's secular elements Besançon singles out the German intellectual tradition, particularly Hegelian philosophy, and the French political model of the ideologue:

> Sincere, disinterested, loving neither women, wine, nor money, without friends, an indefatigable member of societies, good at maneuvering, believing all that he said, seeing traps and plots everywhere, the high priest of language, above all impersonal and abstract. Robespierre irresistibly prefigures Lenin.

What has become of Leninist ideology? As anyone can testify who is familiar with what now passes in the USSR for ideological debate, there is scant interest there in doctrine as such, except as a device to impart theoretical respectability to current practices and policies. In a statement that unwittingly echoes a passage in George Orwell's *1984*, Besançon writes: "The substance of the Leninist ideology, when it is in power, is that power itself."

Entrenchment and consolidation is one application of power; expansion is another. Beginning with the outbreak of World War I, Lenin's writing contains references to Clausewitz's famous dictum that war is "a continuation of politics by other means." As Besançon notes, Clausewitz's implication is that the ultimate purpose of war, as of politics, is "a negotiated sharing or division between autonomous subjects." By contrast, Leninism denies legitimacy to its ideological foes:

> In Lenin . . . war, by its very nature, aims at the total defeat, the elimination, the extermination of the enemy, and is necessarily accompanied by a hatred which Clausewitz judged unnecessary. This is precisely because Lenin's war was a continuation of a politics which, in essence, aimed at the total defeat of the enemy and his extermination. Lenin's intention would have been clearer if he had turned the Clausewitz formula 'round the other way: politics is the continuation of war by other means.

Most aggressive and expansionist movements and their leaders conceal their true intentions. Not so the Leninists. Like the Nazis, they are remarkably sincere, and those who ignore their openly proclaimed aims do so at their peril.

In a curious way, these two books complement each other. Besançon traces the convoluted ancestry of the Soviet Union's political doctrine, while Ulam describes a number of challenges to that doctrine during its more than six decades as the official faith of the world's largest country. Ulam's book helps explain the failure of those challenges so far, while Besançon's suggests why, past defeats notwithstanding, we can expect similar challenges in the future. In view of the fragile balance between the components of Russian nationalism and messianic Marxism within Soviet ideology, such challenges may be all but inevitable.

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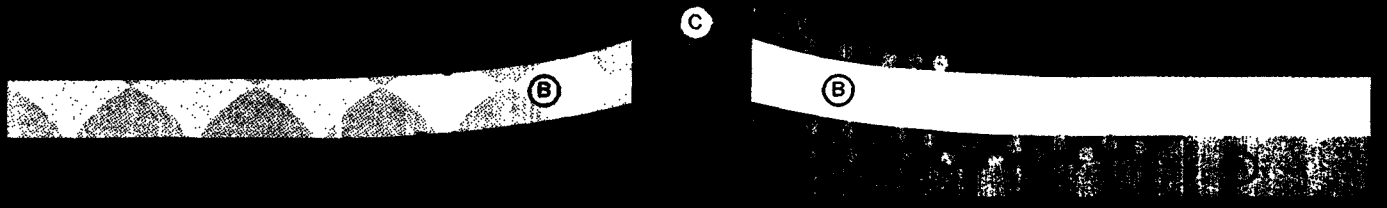

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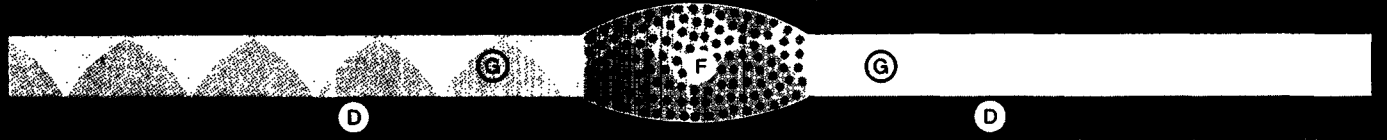

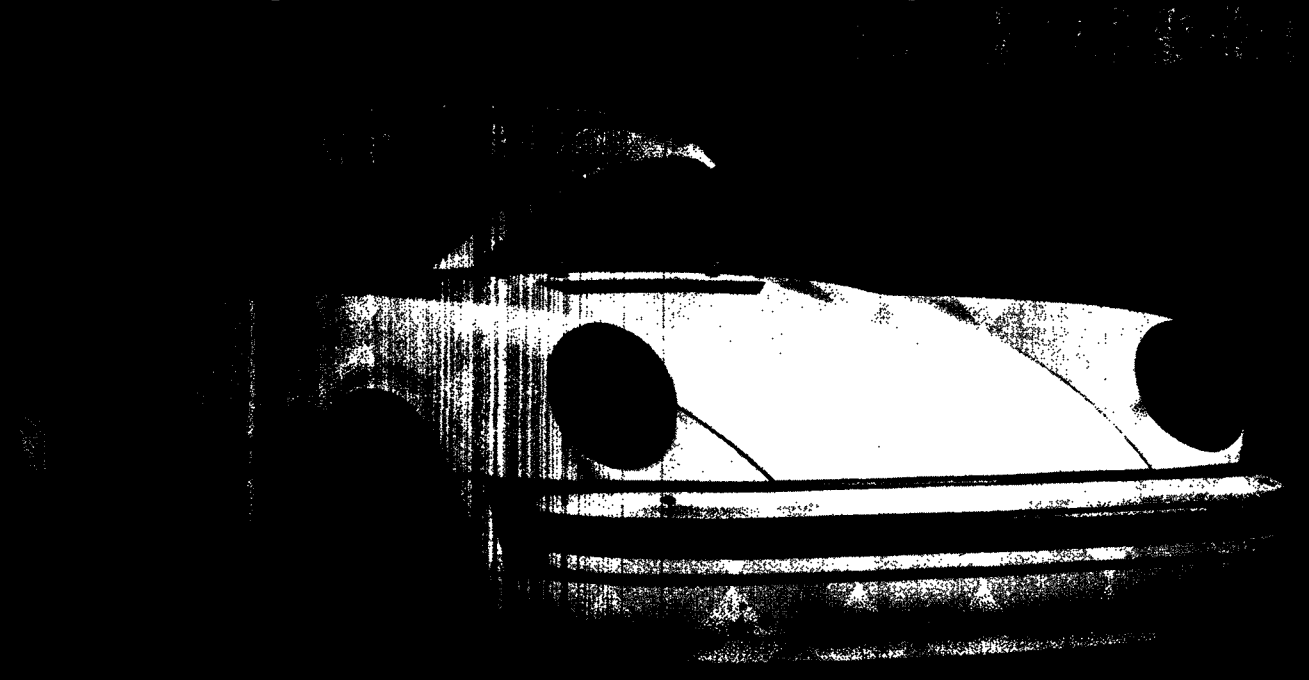

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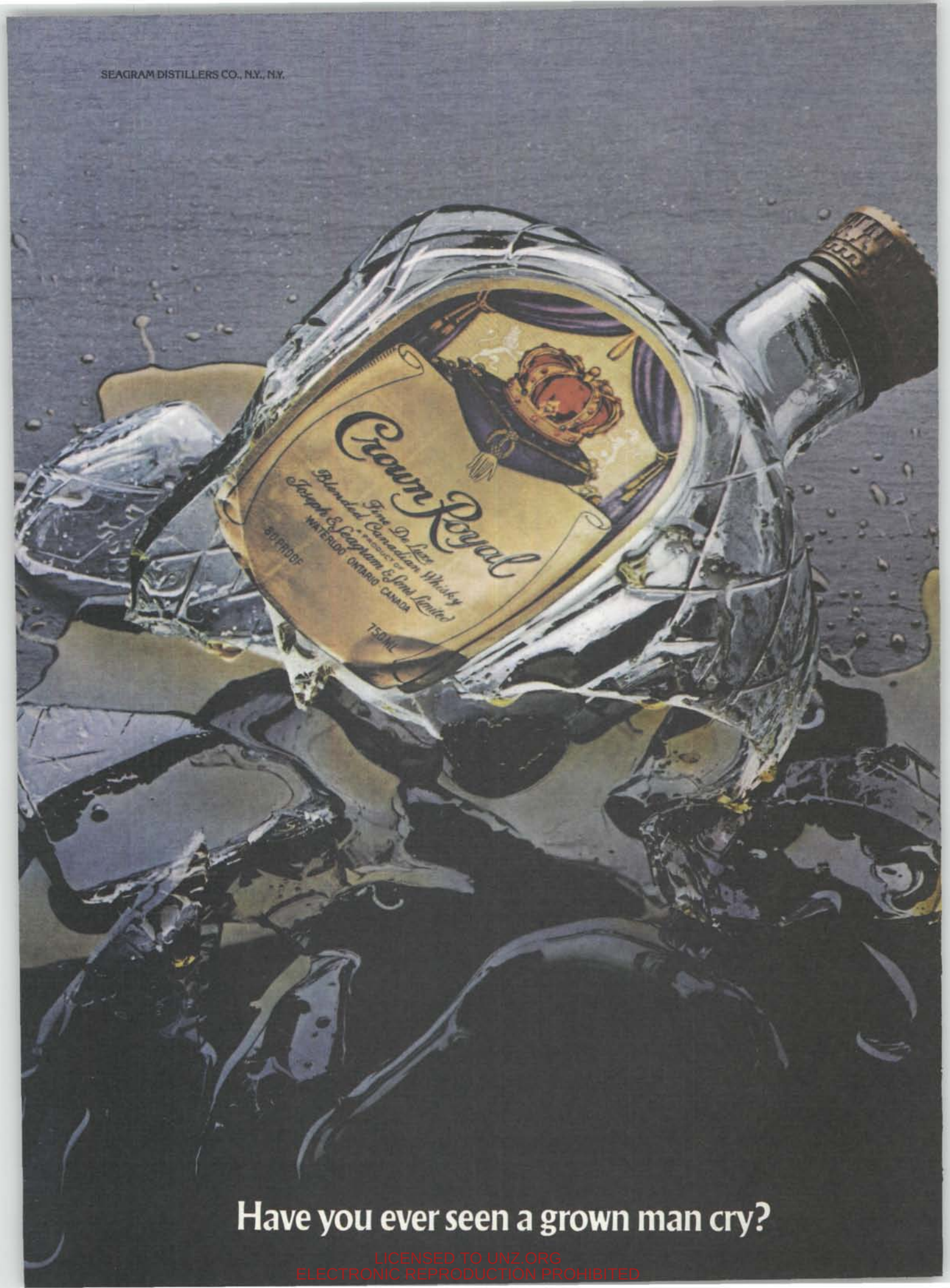

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